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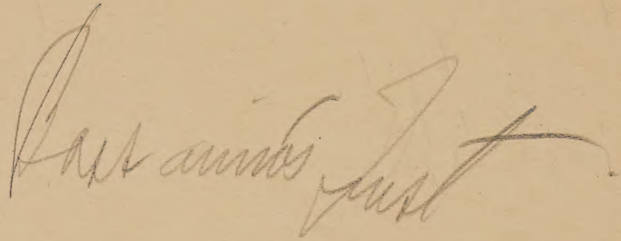

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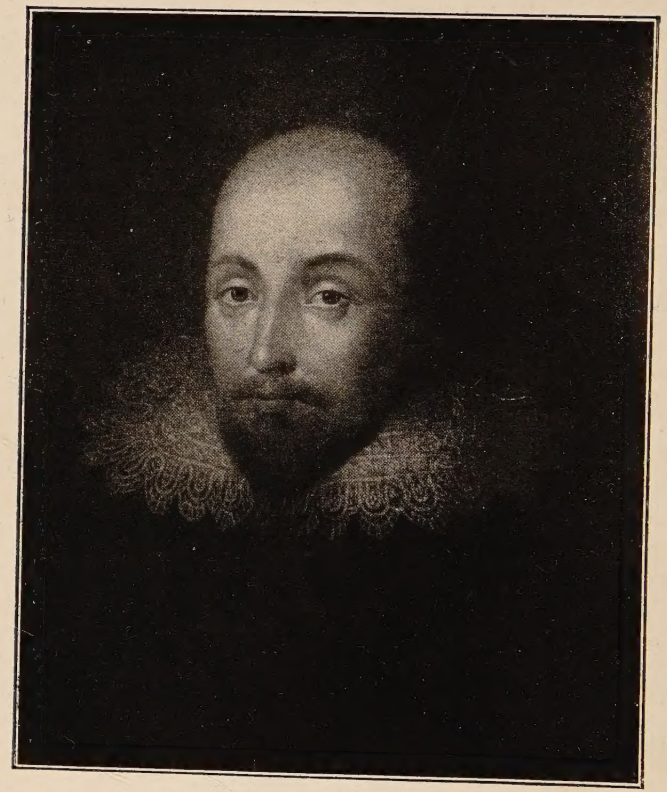

William Shakespeare
The Jansen portrait

SHAKESPEARE'S MERCHANT OF VENICE

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INTRODUCTION

I

SHAKESPEARE'S LIFE AND WORKS

William Shakespeare, perhaps the greatest writer who ever lived, was born in 1564, about a lifetime after the discovery of America, and died in 1616, four years before our Pilgrim Fathers landed on Plymouth Rock. We do not know the exact day of his birth; but it must have been in the latter part of April, for he was baptized on the twenty-sixth of that month, and in those times children usually received baptism when only a few days old. There is a tradition that he died on his birthday; if that is true, he was born on April twenty-third.

He was a country boy. Stratford-on-Avon, his native place, is a prosperous little town among the hills of central England. It lies in a wide valley, through which runs the beautiful river Avon. There are hints in the poet's later writings that, while roaming here as a child he had learned to observe birds and flowers, and had developed that wide-awake eye, that habit of noticing things, which is the best of all educations.

His father, John Shakespeare, had little learning but a good amount of natural ability. He was a "merry-cheeked old man," we are told, and one who did not fear to crack a joke with his famous son. During the poet's

early boyhood John Shakespeare was a well-to-do business man, and head alderman or chief official of the borough of Stratford. But while William was still a mere boy, his father met with financial reverses which left him in comparative poverty.

There was a grammar school at Stratford; and here young Shakespeare must have learned some Latin, and perhaps a little Greek, as these studies were more generally required at that time than they are now. English was not taught in those days; and the future master of our language never had a chance to startle his teachers by his mastery of our mother tongue in some juvenile essay. Whatever he learned at school, his education, if we may believe tradition, was left unfinished. Apparently, his father's misfortunes compelled him to leave school when he was not more than sixteen; and the only education which he had afterward was the one gained in the great class-room of life.

However, we must never for this reason think of the mature Shakespeare as an uneducated man. Just the contrary is true, as his writings show. He had within himself that which took the place of a college training, the natural power to learn. All his lifetime he was learning, learning from the books he read, learning from the men he met, remembering all that he learned, and thinking out new ideas about all that he remembered. For this reason the education of the mature Shakespeare was both wide and deep, the finest, most practical kind of an education, which finds something in books that gives a new interest to real life, and something in real life that adds

a new interest to books. He must have included in his wide range books by Greek, Latin, French, and Italian writers, as well as English.

At sixteen or earlier, as we have said, young William left school. At eighteen he married. His wife was the daughter of a poor farmer who lived about a mile from Stratford. Her name was Anne Hathaway, and she was eight years older than her bridegroom. We have some reason for believing that Shakespeare, like most young men who marry before they are old enough to know their own minds, was not wholly happy in his wedded life. Anne Hathaway may have loved him; but she could hardly have been the woman whom he would have chosen had he waited. Three children were born to them, two daughters and a son. Then Shakespeare went to London, and apparently saw his family only at rare intervals for years after.

No record tells us just when or why the poet took this journey to London. It is usually assumed that he went in his twenty-third or twenty-fourth year. One reason for his departure may have been that he had incurred the ill-will of a neighboring gentleman, Sir Thomas Lucy, whose deer-park he is said to have invaded in a spirit of boyish adventure. Besides this, he would naturally feel that a man of his gifts could accomplish more in a great city, full of literary people and literary activity, than he ever could in a quiet midland town. It was the old story of a brilliant, quick-witted country boy going out to make his way in the world.

Mystery covers the first few years of his life in the

great city. Perhaps he had a long, hard fight with discouragement and poverty; perhaps he met friends and success at the start. But by 1592, when he was twenty-eight years old, he was writing plays for the theaters in London. In the same year a contemporary dramatist speaks of him as an excellent actor on the stage. Here then we have him fairly launched on his literary career. That body of actors and playwrights which our young Stratford poet had joined was a brilliant one. For half a century after Shakespeare's arrival they made London the most splendid theatrical center of modern times. John Lyly, Robert Greene, and Thomas Kyd, were well-known writers before Shakespeare's fame began. Then came Christopher Marlowe, a misguided genius of wonderful promise, who died when he was only twenty-nine. And side by side with Shakespeare or a little after him grew up a body of dramatists such as England has never known since: sturdy, learned Ben Jonson, delightful, irresponsible Thomas Dekker, Beaumont and Fletcher, two lifelong friends who wrote their plays together; and a host of others, Middleton, Ford, Webster, Massinger, great men, whom we hope that you will all know some time.

For more than twenty years, in the company of men like these, Shakespeare lived in the big metropolis and mingled with the life of the London theaters. For a large part of this time, beginning with 1598, he lodged with a French family named Mountjoy. Perhaps he learned French from young Mary Mountjoy; certainly he took a kindly interest in her, for when she fell in love with

Stephen Bellott, Shakespeare helped bring the match about. He must have been a busy man; for not only was he writing on an average two great dramas a year, but he was also acting on the stage, and taking a prominent part in the management and profits of the theatrical companies.

Before long he began to make money, for he was a clear-headed, able business man as well as a great genius. By 1597 he had grown rich enough to buy a house and grounds at Stratford. The house was called New Place, and was at that time the largest in the borough. Five years later the dramatist was able to spend a much larger sum, £320 (equivalent to nearly $13,000 to-day) on the purchase of land around Stratford; and to make other investments in real estate in the same year. This shows that he was steadily growing richer from his connection with the theaters. It also shows that he still kept up his interest in his birthplace even while living and working elsewhere.

To some extent actors and dramatists were looked down on socially at that time; but in spite of his profession Shakespeare won the respect of the wealthy and noble. The young Earl of Southampton became his friend even near the beginning of his London career; and it was to this earl that he dedicated his first writings, two poems, called *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*. Later on he seems to have had ambitions of rising in the world, and procured for himself and his descendants a coat of arms such as the families of the gentry had. There are indications also that at times he

became tired of the actor's profession, and longed for the day when he could retire on his fortune as a country gentleman.

At last this desire was gratified. About 1612 the poet seems to have left the stage and turned back to his birthplace. During his few remaining years he must have made his home at Stratford, perhaps visiting London from time to time on business and entertaining his London friends in merry style when they came to see him. Here he died April 23, 1616, at the comparatively early age of fifty-two. His grave is still shown in the church at Stratford; and crowds of people come every year to see the last resting place of the world's greatest poet.

Shakespeare has left us a few lyric and narrative poems of great beauty. Besides *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece* these include over one hundred and fifty "Sonnets" printed in one collection in 1609. But his reputation rests chiefly on the plays which he wrote for the stage during those busy twenty years in London. Nearly forty of these plays have come down to us, and some may have been lost. As a rule, the ones which he wrote first are not as good as the later ones; but even the poorest of them are brilliant and full of charm, and the best are among the most wonderful books in the world. Sometimes they are full of uproarious, side-splitting fun, sometimes of beautiful romantic poetry, sometimes of sad, pathetic, terrible events; but in their different ways they are all alike interesting and inspiring.

These plays fall into three classes: comedies, histories, and tragedies. The comedies show us the light, merry

side of life, and end happily. They were written at different times through nearly the whole period of their author's literary career. Among them are: *Love's Labour's Lost,* perhaps the first of all Shakespeare's plays; *The Merchant of Venice,* one of his first great successes; *Twelfth Night,* one of the most delightful of masterpieces; *Measure for Measure,* sadder and sterner, though with a happy ending; and the beautiful romances of *The Tempest* and the *Winter's Tale,* presumably the last of all Shakespeare's writings.

The histories were produced early, all but one of them before 1600. They give us dignified, stately pictures of British history, showing the courts and battle-fields of old English kings, and the course of their civil wars. Here in *Richard II* we see a weak ruler crowded from his throne, in *Richard III* the downfall of a bloody tyrant, and in *Henry IV* the struggle between a proud monarch and his angry nobles.

The tragedies are dark, terrible pictures of human sin and sorrow. Most of them were written between the poet's thirty-fifth and forty-fifth years, in the very prime of his power; and they include the greatest masterpieces that the world has ever seen; such plays as *Julius Cæsar, Hamlet, Othello, King Lear,* and *Macbeth.*

In the main, Shakespeare was unquestionably a man of strong and lovable character. He was no idle dreamer, but shrewd and energetic. More than once, when he thought people were trying to cheat him, he sued them at law. Yet in his general dealing with men he was not quarrelsome but the very opposite. "Gentle Will Shake-

speare" his fellow writers called him; and his gentle, kindly reasonableness is one of the most attractive of his traits. When other dramatists quarreled and ridiculed each other, they had nothing but respect for Shakespeare, sure evidence of his pleasant disposition and tact in handling men. In conversation, too, he was witty and brilliant, for we hear of more than one merry tilt between him and his brother poets. We are informed that he was "a handsome, well-shaped man"; and he seems to have had a healthy enjoyment for all the good things of life, good dinners, good company, spirited horses, fresh air, and country scenes. His faults were very forgivable ones, and his virtues such as make our hearts warm toward him. Above all we admire him for his deep insight into human nature, for his power of understanding his fellow men and sympathizing with them. Generous, headstrong old Ben Jonson, who had known him for years, called him the "sweet Swan of Avon," and said of him, "I loved the man, and do honor his memory on this side idolatry, as much as any." And the great poet Milton, who was a boy when Shakespeare died, speaks of him as "Sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child," and "Dear son of memory, great heir of fame."

II

SHAKESPEARE'S LANGUAGE AND VERSE

Anyone who wishes to find as much as possible in our great poet must be willing to spend some time and effort

on the details of his language. Since the day when Shakespeare lived and wrote three hundred years have passed. During that long interval men have changed in their use of words and in their method of speaking. New expressions have crept into use and old ones have been gradually forgotten. This change in language has gone on just as steadily, though of course not nearly as rapidly, as the change in fashions of dress. For this reason we find many words or phrases in Shakespeare which were in common use in his day, but which seem odd to us now. Like the stiff ruffs and long hose of the poet's contemporaries, they were once a part of everyday life but have long since gone out of fashion. For example, in Elizabethan times *to peize* meant *to weigh*. To-day the appearance of Sir Walter Raleigh in Elizabethan garb would scarcely seem more odd than the use of such a word.

Then, besides the words which have disappeared altogether during those three centuries, there are many others which have completely changed their meaning. When Shakespeare's schoolmaster said to the bewildered class, "Do you conceive me?" he meant, "Do you understand me?" To-day we have the word *conceive,* but we never use it in the sense of *understand*. These cases where the word has altered its meaning but not its form are very common and should be carefully examined. Sometimes the whole sense of a passage is confused, or even rendered ridiculous, if we give such expressions our modern meaning where the author intended another. For instance, the word *dear* formerly meant either greatly loved or

greatly hated; and when Hamlet speaks about his "dearest foe" the young prince does not mean at all that he loves his enemy, but that he hates that enemy above all other men. In thought and feeling Shakespeare is refreshingly modern; but we cannot appreciate his thought and feeling unless we make his individual words mean to us what they meant to the men of his time.

Another thing which should be mastered before we can appreciate the poet at his best is his meter. The meter generally employed by Shakespeare is known as Blank Verse. Like Longfellow's *Hiawatha* it does not depend for its beauty upon riming words, but produces the effect of poetry wholly by the swing and music of the lines. It differs from *Hiawatha,* however, in that its swing is a longer, slower one, less like the trotting of a horse and more like the rise and fall of waves at sea. Here is an illustration of it:

> "I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,
> But I should think of shallows and of flats,
> And see my wealthy Andrew docked in sand
> Vailing her high top lower than her ribs
> To kiss her burial."

If we read one of these lines, we shall find that our voice divides it into five waves of sound, rising and breaking, one after the other, something like this:

Each one of these waves is called a "foot"; and every regular line in Shakespeare is said to contain five feet. If we notice the line again while reading it, we see that the wave effect is produced by the order of accented and unaccented syllables. The rising part of each wave, or foot, is formed by a syllable which we should naturally pronounce lightly, without stress or emphasis. The falling part of each wave is a stressed or accented syllable, one on which the voice comes down heavily as we read. In other words, the regular type of line in Blank Verse owes its billowy swing to the fact that it consists of five waves of sound called feet, each wave containing two syllables, the second accented and the first not. In technical language such a foot is called an iambus; and the technical name for Blank Verse is "iambic pentameter," which means a line made up of five iambic feet.

The regular type of line, then, in Blank Verse is very simple. It contains ten syllables. Of these, the odd syllables—first, third, fifth, seventh, and ninth—are ones which we should speak lightly without emphasis. The even ones—second, fourth, sixth, eighth, and tenth—are those which we should naturally accent heavily as we read. The line is supposed to be divided into five feet, each consisting of one unaccented syllable and one accented syllable following it. Such a line when scanned is usually written like this:

⏑ ′	⏑ ′	⏑ ′	⏑ ′	⏑ ′
And see	my weal	thy An	drew docked	in sand.
foot 1	foot 2	foot 3	foot 4	foot 5

But not all Shakespeare's lines are of the regular type

described above. If they were, although each separate verse might be good, the poem as a whole would grow monotonous. Consequently, for the sake of variety, the poet often makes one foot in the line unlike the others. There are three common ways in which this can be done.

The first of these is to use two unaccented syllables in the place of one at the beginning of a foot. This foot will then consist of three syllables, the first two unaccented, forming together the rising part of the wave, and the last accented forming the descending part. Such a case is shown in the combination "the occa-" in the following verse:

And you	embrace	the occa	sion to	depart.
foot 1	foot 2	foot 3	foot 4	foot 5

The second variation consists in adding an extra unaccented syllable at the end of the line. This is called a "feminine ending," and is illustrated by the second syllable of "merry" below:

I would	have stayed	till I	had made	you mer	ry.
foot 1	foot 2	foot 3	foot 4	foot 5	extra

The third possible change is to have one foot turned around, so that the accented syllable comes first and the unaccented second. This change is seen in foot 1 of the first line given below and foot 4 of the other:

Vailing	her high	top low	er than	her ribs.
foot 1	foot 2	foot 3	foot 4	foot 5

Would make	me sad.	My wind	cooling	my broth.
foot 1	foot 2	foot 3	foot 4	foot 5

This is a more violent change than either of the others; but Shakespeare handles it so skilfully that its effect at rare intervals gives vigor and spring to the verse.

As a general thing there is not more than one irregular foot in a line; but occasionally there are two or three. Here is a quite irregular line:

For you | to laugh | and leap, | and say | you are mer | ry.

It must be remembered that these irregular lines are not mistakes but changes made by the poet intentionally, to give more variety to the music of a passage.

In Blank Verse we can not usually have more than two unaccented syllables together. If there are three the swing of the meter forces us to pronounce the middle one with an accent; and consequently we mark it with an accent in the scansion. Here is an example. The "and" in the combination "-lows and of" must be read with a stress to get the proper scansion or the right swing to the line:

But I | should think | of shal | lows and | of flats.

In the same way, when we find three syllables together which from their sense would all be accented, we usually treat the middle one as if unstressed. In the line below we do this with "strange" because it occurs between the stressed sounds "framed" and "fel-" and we cannot have three stressed syllables together without spoiling the wave effect as we speak the passage:

Nature | hath framed | strange fel | lows in | her time.

The above variations are so common that a reader should know them as he does his own name. Beside these, there are certain rarer variations which may be mentioned here.

Occasionally a line occurs in which we must make a long pause take the place of a missing syllable, as below:

That she | did give | me, (pause) | whose po | sy was.

Even Shakespeare cannot use these lines often without becoming harsh; consequently there are very few of them.

Somewhat more frequently he uses lines of six, four, or two feet instead of five. Here is one of six:

Who choos | eth me | must give | and haz | ard all | he hath.

Here is one of two:

Fast bind, | fast find.

Even lines of only one foot occur.

To read Shakespeare's verse as he would have read it, we must also remember that many words have changed in pronunciation since his day, just as others have changed in meaning. Endings in *ean* and *ion* must often be pronounced as two syllables instead of one.

Your mind | is tos | sing on | the o | ce-an.

Mislike | me not | for my | complex | i-on.

Sometimes, too, the accent is on a different syllable from that of the modern word.

I tell | thee, la | dy, this | as*pect* | of mine.

We trif | le time | I pray | thee *pur* | sue sen | tence.

It is not to be implied by these rules and directions that one should scan every line in Shakespeare. But we should scan enough to get the general swing of the verse so that we may always read it correctly; and when we come to an unusual type of line we should be able to analyze it and know just how it should be read. It would be desecration to consider Shakespeare's beautiful lines as nothing but exercises in scansion, mere words to be cut up into feet according to rule; but it is a still greater desecration to read those beautiful lines, as so many young readers do, without regard to their swing or music, turning the poet's waves of splendid sound into drawling, stammering, limping prose. All his plays were written to be spoken; and it is only when we read them aloud, getting into their full current of sound, that we can properly appreciate and enjoy them.

III

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

A play differs from a story in that it tries to show us real men and women in interesting situations, where a story would simply tell us what they did. Often when

we have read some fascinating novel or fairy tale, we exclaim, "If I could only have been there and have seen it!" A play is an attempt on the author's part to make us believe that we actually are there and see it. Thus, in *The Merchant of Venice* we are not told that Shylock made a treacherous bargain with Antonio; but we see Shylock and Antonio talking together, hear their words, and hear the bargain concluded. To get this lifelike effect at its best we must see the play acted. In so doing we may watch a flesh-and-blood Shylock moving back and forth before us, may overhear his low, ominous whispers to himself, and catch the wicked gleam in his eyes when he feels that his victim is in the trap. This was the way that Shakespeare meant us to enjoy his plays, for they were all written on purpose to be acted. But if we cannot do this, the next best thing is to read the play, and picture to ourselves the actions of the different people as we follow the words they speak. We must make our own imagination take the place of the stage. When Shylock cries, "Justice! the law! my ducats and my daughter!", we must call up his image before our mind's eye—the white beard, the hooked nose, the wild gestures of his clawlike fingers, the mingling of ferocity and loneliness in his voice. If we read Shakespeare in this way we shall find his work almost as lifelike as when acted; and in one respect we shall be better off, for we shall have more time to linger over fine passages and discover how much there is in them.

A play which ends happily is a comedy; one which ends unhappily is a tragedy. Taken as a whole, *The Merchant*

of Venice is clearly a comedy; for it is full of cheerful scenes, the romance of "love's young dream," and leaves all the main characters hopeful and fortunate at the conclusion. Yet it is not unmixed comedy, for the scenes where Antonio is threatened with death by his remorseless creditor are almost tragic. Tragic, too, in its way, is the final departure of the old Jew, baffled, beaten, and made a public laughing-stock for the men whom he hated. But these dark spots, like passing clouds on a summer day, only make the sunshine afterward seem the brighter by comparison.

In this comedy, as in most of his work, Shakespeare borrowed the rough outlines of the story from the writings of other men. This does not mean that he should have any the less credit, for he changed and improved his materials, transforming them into something which the original writers never could have given us. Just as the Wright brothers took the clumsy, impracticable machines of their predecessors and remodeled them into engines that would fly, so Shakespeare took the dull, rambling, unreadable narratives of the men before him and made them work, transformed them into creations of beauty and poetry and interest. The material for *The Merchant of Venice* was not all drawn from one source. The story of the pound of flesh was many centuries old. Its earliest known form has been traced back to a poem of ancient India, the *Mahábhárata;* and it had been retold with variations from age to age. Two centuries before Shakespeare it had been included in an Italian novel called *Il Pecorone* (The Blockhead); and from Italy it came

into England and reached Shakespeare. The story of the three caskets he may have taken from the *Gesta Romanorum* (Deeds of the Romans), a collection of stories written first in Latin and then translated into English. In one of these stories a princess makes choice between three caskets, gold, silver, and lead, and wins the emperor's son by choosing the leaden one. The bare outlines of the story were ancient, but Shakespeare first gave them value and meaning.

It is probable that Shakespeare drew considerable of his material for *The Merchant of Venice* from another play on the same subject which was already in existence. In *The School of Abuse* written by a man named Gosson in 1579 (when our great dramatist was a boy of fifteen at Stratford), there is mention of a play called the *Jew*, "representing the greediness of worldly choosers, and the bloody minds of usurers." That play is wholly lost; but, judging from the above quotation, it must have contained a good deal which Shakespeare used later in *The Merchant of Venice*. This borrowing again need not diminish our respect for him. In those days dramatists borrowed freely from one another, and considered it perfectly fair and legitimate to do so. Shakespeare resorted to this method several times; and in nearly every case his work was so vastly superior to that of the writer from whom he borrowed that it was like transmuting charcoal into diamonds. He was simply trying and succeeding where another had tried and failed.

Three different texts of *The Merchant of Venice* which are very important to us were printed either during the

author's life or shortly after his death. Two of these texts appeared in the form of Quartos, that is, single plays printed separately in books of medium size. They are known as Quarto One and Quarto Two. The third text formed part of the First Folio, a huge book in which nearly all of Shakespeare's plays were published together. Shakespeare himself had nothing to do with any of these editions. The Quartos were printed without his consent by other men, the Folio by his friends after his death. Like most books of that time all three were full of mistakes. In some cases we find that a particular line does not read the same way in every one of these editions. Such errors are usually due to carelessness in copying or printing. They are not always serious, but in a few cases they change the meaning of a whole sentence. When a modern scholar prepares an edition like the present one, he has to use his judgment in these cases to decide which of the two or three different readings for a line is the one which the poet really intended. One or two of these doubtful readings are mentioned in the notes. In the main, however, an ordinary reader need not trouble himself about such passages. They show the carelessness of all printers in that age; but in general the mistakes can be easily corrected.

The Merchant of Venice did not appear in print until 1600; but we know that it was on the stage earlier than that, for in 1598 a writer named Francis Meres spoke of it as a play already familiar to the public. As far back as 1594 there is mention of a "Venetian Comedy"; but there were many comedies about Venice and other Italian

cities in those days, and consequently we cannot feel certain that this "Venetian Comedy" was Shakespeare's play. At all events, *The Merchant of Venice* must have been written somewhere between 1594 and 1598, when the author was about thirty years old; that is, it was one of the earlier plays, though by no means the earliest. It was the best drama which the poet had produced up to this time, and ranks high among his most famous works.

Its reputation is due to many causes. For one thing there is the beauty and melody of the verse. Then, combined with this, is the author's marvelous command of words. He never uses dull, trite, or shop-worn terms, but expressions so vivid that they call up clear pictures before our imagination and make us see with our mind's eye the very thing which the poet is describing. Then, too, he has such a wonderful variety in his language. As fast as we begin to grow tired of one word he throws it aside and brings in another with similar meaning. The whole vocabulary of the English language is at his beck and call; and for this reason his style is always breezy and fresh when that of other men grows dull and stale by their tiresome repetition of the same time-worn expressions.

Besides this, the play is remarkable for its rapid succession of brilliant and interesting scenes. To hold an audience well, not only must a drama be a picture of real life, clothed in expressive language and melodious poetry; but it should also be full of action, of stirring events. We must feel that we are looking, as through a window, at something which is no ordinary scene but an eventful

turning-point in many lives. In *The Merchant of Venice,* Shakespeare provides this rapid action, this wealth of stirring incident, by weaving four stories into one. First, there is the story of the bond between Antonio and the Jew, then the courtship of Jessica and Lorenzo, then the wooing of Portia by Bassanio, and lastly, the episode of the rings in which Portia and her friend outwit their husbands after they are married. By connecting these four stories with each other, and shifting the reader back and forth from one of them to another Shakespeare fills every scene with action and interest. From start to finish there is no lag or let-up in his hold on our attention.

A still deeper charm in *The Merchant of Venice,* as in all Shakespeare's plays, is found in its portrayal of human nature. At a first reading this analysis of life may not seem as enjoyable as the excitement of the rapidly moving plot; but on a careful study it will mean more. The best qualities in a book, like the best qualities in a friend, are not always those which we notice at a first meeting; they are the qualities which grow on us with time, which become an ever increasing source of pleasure and comfort the more we see of them. And the one feature about the plays of Shakespeare which, more than all others, makes them our lifelong friends and makes us find new enjoyment in reading them for the hundredth time, is this study of human nature, this coming in touch with the warm sympathies of other men and women. The great poet is giving us a liberal education here. He is showing how much good there is in the worst of us, how many mistakes the best of us make; and he is thus teaching us

an attitude of general reasonableness and charity toward everybody. When we see Antonio so contemptuous toward Shylock we are reminded that the most generous and warm-hearted of men may do very unjustifiable things through narrow prejudice. And even in the fierce, sordid heart of Shylock we find more than one redeeming trait. He had loved his wife, he loved his daughter; and the vindictiveness which deforms his character is a vindictiveness which we too should feel if we had been all our life insulted and despised. Antonio and Shylock hate each other, but we can hate neither of them. Their mutual enmity is due to the utter inability of each to understand the other. By the aid of Shakespeare we understand them both; and as soon as we understand them, hate changes to sympathy. Nor is this skill of the poet confined to the handling of one or two characters; it weaves its enchantment around all. What a charming woman is Portia; what a loving wife, what an eloquent pleader, what an adorable tease! How delightful is the contrast between the polished gentleman Bassanio and his warm-hearted but blunt-spoken friend. Gradually as we read Shakespeare we grow to realize what that vague phrase, "the study of character," means; that there is a deeper, more lasting interest in watching the strife of human passions than the strife of athletes or the clash of armies; that there is a nobler thrill of excitement in discovering why men act as they do than in discovering pirates' treasure; and that between the leaves of Shakespeare's plays we can find a circle of friends whom nothing can take away from us. Nor is that all. In studying these

people we come to know the living people around us. The world is full of Shylocks, Portias, Bassanios, if we once learn how to understand them. Just as a careful observer of birds or flowers teaches us to find a thousand interesting things in field or wood where for years we had noticed nothing, so this great student of human nature is opening up to us a new world of wonders in the minds and hearts of men.

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(Prepared by Professor F. E. Pierce of Yale)

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Shakspere, by Edward Dowden. (American Book Co., New York.) A simple, compact, and readable book. It should be used in connection with a more modern work, as recent research has changed our ideas of Elizabethan theaters somewhat since the book was written.

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The plays assigned by modern scholarship wholly or in part to Shakespeare are thirty-seven in number. Sixteen of them were published separately during the poet's life, and the others were not printed until after his death. In 1623 thirty-six of the above plays (all except *Pericles*) were collected by the friends and fellow actors of the dead poet and published together in the First Folio. *Pericles* was added in the Third Folio in 1664. These thirty-seven plays, loosely classified, comprise the following:

I. EARLY PLAYS BEFORE SHAKESPEARE HAD REACHED HIS FULL POWER

King Henry VI, Parts I, II, III.
A series of historical events, unfolding the gradual decline of English power and the growth of civil war under a weak king.

Titus Andronicus.
A powerful but brutal play, unlike any of Shakespeare's later work.

Love's Labour's Lost.
A picture in brilliant dialogue of the lighter side of court life.

The Comedy of Errors.
A farcical comedy, depending on mistaken identity of twins.

The Two Gentlemen of Verona.
A romantic comedy, dealing with the disguises and adventures of lovers.

A Midsummer Night's Dream.
A love story and fairy tale combined.

Romeo and Juliet.
A tragedy of love, in which the hero and heroine become victims of an ancient feud between their families.

Richard II.

Richard III.

King John.

Three historical dramas, each dealing with the struggles and downfall of an English king.

II. THE PERIOD OF GREAT HISTORIES AND COMEDIES

The Merchant of Venice.

The story of two young lovers who are brought together by the devotion of a faithful friend, and who in turn save this friend from the revenge of Shylock the Jew.

The Taming of the Shrew.

An ingenious farcical comedy, in which a shrewish wife is tamed into gentleness.

King Henry IV, Parts I and II.

Stately pictures of English civil wars, interspersed with the delightful comedy of Falstaff and his companions.

King Henry V.

A picture of the English conquests in France, centering around Henry V as a national hero.

Merry Wives of Windsor.

A laughable series of practical jokes played on Falstaff.

Much Ado About Nothing.

As You Like It.

Twelfth Night.

Three romantic comedies of the highest rank. *Much Ado* combines the delightful wit-combats of Beatrice and Benedict with the touching story of a lady unjustly accused but finally cleared. *As You Like It* is a picture of pastoral life far from the world's uproar in the forest of Arden. *Twelfth Night* traces the fortunes of a shipwrecked heroine who by unselfish devotion wins a noble lover.

All's Well That Ends Well.

Troilus and Cressida.

Measure for Measure.

Three bitter, sarcastic comedies, revealing the baser aspects of human nature.

III. THE PERIOD OF GREAT TRAGEDIES

Julius Cæsar.
A picture of the national upheaval connected with the death of Cæsar. Its central figure is the noble but misguided patriot Brutus.

Hamlet.
One of the most thoughtful and poetical of dramas, centering around the story of a son called to avenge a murdered father.

Othello.
The tragedy of a noble but passionate man who becomes the dupe of a villain, and through mistaken jealousy murders his innocent bride.

King Lear.
The tragedy of ingratitude. King Lear gives all his lands to his two eldest daughters, but their cruelty leads to his death and that of his one faithful child Cordelia.

Macbeth.
A terrible picture of the retribution which follows ambition and murder. Macbeth assassinates his predecessor to become king, but is overthrown and dies miserably in the hour of defeat.

Antony and Cleopatra.
The tragedy of a great soldier who sacrifices an empire for love of a fascinating but wicked woman.

Timon of Athens.
The tragedy of a noble Athenian who ruins himself by unwise generosity.

Coriolanus.
The tragedy of a noble Roman whose brave but unreasonably haughty spirit makes him the enemy and desolator of his country.

IV. ROMANTIC TALES OF SHAKESPEARE'S LATER YEARS

Pericles.
The adventures of a family who are long separated and finally united.

Cymbeline.

A Winter's Tale.

Two stories of mistaken jealousy, with frequent threats of disaster but with a happy ending. *Cymbeline* is a story of ancient Britain; the scene of the *Winter's Tale* is laid in Sicily and Bohemia.

The Tempest.

The story of an exiled duke on an enchanted island. Here he brings his enemies within his power and is restored to his dukedom.

King Henry VIII.

A series of picturesque events in the life of King Henry and Cardinal Wolsey.

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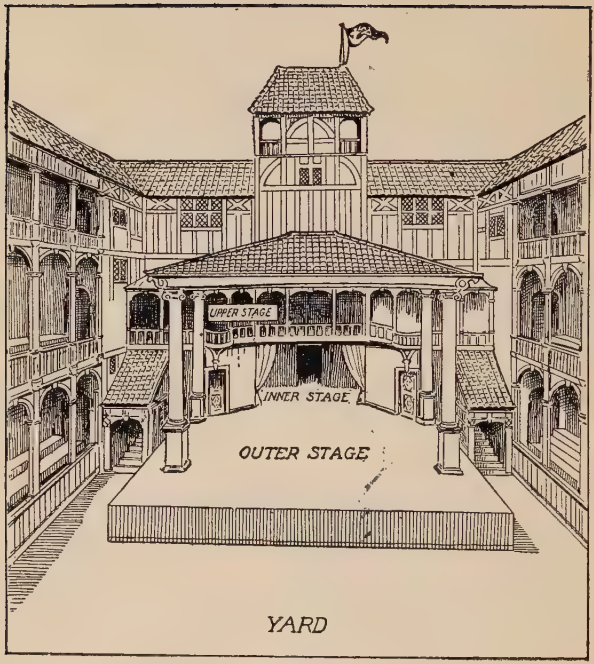


Interior of Fortune Theater

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE DUKE OF VENICE.
THE PRINCE OF MOROCCO, } *suitors to Portia.*
THE PRINCE OF ARRAGON, }
ANTONIO, *a merchant of Venice.*
BASSANIO, *his friend, suitor likewise to Portia.*
SALANIO, }
SALARINO, } *friends to Antonio and Bassanio.*
GRATIANO, }
SALERIO, }
LORENZO, *in love with Jessica.*
SHYLOCK, *a rich Jew.*
TUBAL, *a Jew, his friend.*
LAUNCELOT GOBBO, *the clown, servant to Shylock.*
OLD GOBBO, *father to Launcelot.*
LEONARDO, *servant to Bassanio.*
BALTHASAR, } *servants to Portia.*
STEPHANO, }

PORTIA, *a rich heiress.*
NERISSA, *her waiting-maid.*
JESSICA, *daughter to Shylock.*

Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice, Jailer, Servants to Portia, and other Attendants.

SCENE: *Partly at Venice, and partly at Belmont, the seat of Portia, on the Continent.*

The Merchant of Venice

ACT FIRST

Scene I

Venice. A street.

Enter Antonio, Salarino, *and* Salanio.

Ant. In sooth, I know not why I am so sad.
It wearies me; you say it wearies you;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn;
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,
That I have much ado to know myself.
Salar. Your mind is tossing on the ocean,
There, where your argosies with portly sail,
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood,
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,
That curt'sy to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.
Salan. Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,
The better part of my affections would

Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still
Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind,
Peering in maps for ports, and piers, and roads;
And every object that might make me fear
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt
Would make me sad.

Salar. My wind, cooling my broth,
Would blow me an ague, when I thought
What harm a wind too great at sea might do.
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,
But I should think of shallows and of flats,
And see my wealthy Andrew docked in sand
Vailing her high top lower than her ribs
To kiss her burial. Should I go to church
And see the holy edifice of stone,
And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,
Which, touching but my gentle vessel's side,
Would scatter all her spices on the stream,
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks;
And, in a word, but even now worth this,
And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought
To think of this, and shall I lack the thought
That such a thing bechanced would make me sad?
But tell not me; I know, Antonio
Is sad to think upon his merchandise.

Ant. Believe me, no. I thank my fortune for it,
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate
Upon the fortune of this present year.
Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

Salar. Why, then you are in love.

Ant. Fie, fie!

Salar. Not in love neither? Then let us say you are sad
Because you are not merry; and 'twere as easy
For you to laugh, and leap, and say you are merry
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed Janus,
Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time;
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,
And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper,
And other of such vinegar aspect
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile,
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.

Enter Bassanio, Lorenzo, *and* Gratiano.

Salan. Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,
Gratiano, and Lorenzo. Fare ye well;
We leave you now with better company.

Salar. I would have stayed till I had made you merry,
If worthier friends had not prevented me.

Ant. Your worth is very dear in my regard.
I take it, your own business calls on you,
And you embrace the occasion to depart.

Salar. Good morrow, my good lords.

Bass. Good signiors both, when shall we laugh? say, when?
You grow exceeding strange. Must it be so?

Salar. We'll make our leisures to attend on yours.

[*Exeunt Salarino and Salanio.*

Lor. My Lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,

We two will leave you; but, at dinner-time,
I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.

Bass. I will not fail you.

Gra. You look not well, Signior Antonio;
You have too much respect upon the world.
They lose it that do buy it with much care.
Believe me, you are marvellously changed.

Ant. I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano,
A stage, where every man must play a part,
And mine a sad one.

Gra. Let me play the fool!
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come;
And let my liver rather heat with wine,
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why should a man whose blood is warm within
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster,
Sleep when he wakes, and creep into the jaundice
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio—
I love thee, and it is my love that speaks—
There are a sort of men whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,
And do a wilful stillness entertain,
With purpose to be dressed in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit,
As who should say, "I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips let no dog bark!"
O my Antonio, I do know of these,
That therefore only are reputed wise
For saying nothing, when, I am very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears

Which, hearing them, would call their brothers
fools.
I'll tell thee more of this another time.
But fish not with this melancholy bait
For this fool gudgeon, this opinion.
Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile;
I'll end my exhortation after dinner.

Lor. Well, we will leave you, then, till dinner-time.
I must be one of these same dumb wise men,
For Gratiano never lets me speak.

Gra. Well, keep me company but two years moe,
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.

Ant. Farewell! I'll grow a talker for this gear.

Gra. Thanks, i' faith; for silence is only commendable
In a neat's tongue dried, and a maid not vendible.
[*Exeunt Gratiano and Lorenzo.*

Ant. Is that any thing now?

Bass. Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff; you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the search.

Ant. Well, tell me now, what lady is the same
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage,
That you to-day promised to tell me of?

Bass. 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,
How much I have disabled mine estate
By something showing a more swelling port
Than my faint means would grant continuance.

Nor do I now make moan to be abridged
From such a noble rate; but my chief care
Is to come fairly off from the great debts,
Wherein my time, something too prodigal,
Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio,
I owe the most, in money and in love;
And from your love I have a warranty
To unburthen all my plots and purposes
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

Ant. I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it;
And if it stand, as you yourself still do,
Within the eye of honor, be assured,
My purse, my person, my extremest means,
Lie all unlocked to your occasions.

Bass. In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight
The self-same way with more advisèd watch,
To find the other forth; and by adventuring both,
I oft found both. I urge this childhood proof,
Because what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much, and, like a wilful youth,
That which I owe is lost; but if you please
To shoot another arrow that self way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the aim, or to find both,
Or bring your latter hazard back again,
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

Ant. You know me well, and herein spend but time
To wind about my love with circumstance;
And out of doubt you do me now more wrong

In making question of my uttermost
Than if you had made waste of all I have.
Then do but say to me what I should do
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest unto it; therefore, speak.
Bass. In Belmont is a lady richly left;
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues. Sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages.
Her name is Portia, nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia.
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renownéd suitors; and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece,
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand,
And many Jasons come in quest of her.
O my Antonio, had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind presages me such thrift,
That I should questionless be fortunate!
Ant. Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea;
Neither have I money, nor commodity
To raise a present sum. Therefore go forth;
Try what my credit can in Venice do.
That shall be racked, even to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is; and I no question make,
To have it of my trust, or for my sake. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II

Belmont. A room in Portia's house.

Enter Portia *and* Nerissa.

Por. By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world.

Ner. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are; and yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much as they that starve with nothing. It is no mean happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean. Superfluity comes sooner by white hairs; but competency lives longer.

Por. Good sentences, and well pronounced.

Ner. They would be better if well followed.

Por. If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions; I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood; but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree; such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose

me a husband. O me, the word "choose"! I may neither choose whom I would, nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one, nor refuse none?

Ner. Your father was ever virtuous, and holy men, at their death, have good inspirations; therefore, the lottery that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver, and lead,—whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you,—will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly, but one who shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

Por. I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level at my affection.

Ner. First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

Por. Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts that he can shoe him himself. . . . .

Ner. Then there is the County Palatine.

Por. He doth nothing but frown, as who should say, "if you will not have me, choose." He hears merry tales, and smiles not. I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his

youth. I had rather be married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these two!

Ner. How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

Por. God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker; but, he!—why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine. He is every man in no man. If a throstle sing, he falls straight a capering. He will fence with his own shadow. If I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him, for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

Ner. What say you, then, to Falconbridge, the young baron of England?

Por. You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him. He hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian; and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture; but, alas, who can converse with a dumb-show? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behavior every where.

Ner. What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbor?

Por. That he hath a neighborly charity in him; for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman, and swore he would pay him again when he was able. I think the Frenchman became his surety, and sealed under for another.

Ner. How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew? 90

Por. Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk. When he is best, he is a little worse than a man; and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast. An the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

Ner. If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform 100 your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

Por. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket; for, if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do any thing, Nerissa, ere I'll be married to a sponge.

Ner. You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords. They have acquainted me with their 110 determinations, which is, indeed, to return to their home, and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition, depending on the caskets.

Por. If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable; for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence; and I pray God grant them a fair departure.

Ner. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

Por. Yes, yes, it was Bassanio,—as I think he was so called.

Ner. True, madam. He, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

Por. I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

Enter a Serving-man.

How now! what news?

Serv. The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave; and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco, who brings word the prince his master will be here to-night.

Por. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good a heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach. If he have the

condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me.

Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before.

Whiles we shut the gates upon one wooer, another knocks at the door. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III

Venice. A public place.

Enter Bassanio *and* Shylock.

Shy. Three thousand ducats; well.

Bass. Ay, sir, for three months.

Shy. For three months; well.

Bass. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

Shy. Antonio shall become bound; well.

Bass. May you stead me? will you pleasure me? shall I know your answer?

Shy. Three thousand ducats for three months, and Antonio bound.

Bass. Your answer to that.

Shy. Antonio is a good man.

Bass. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

Shy. Ho, no, no, no, no! my meaning, in saying he is a good man, is to have you understand me,

that he is sufficient. Yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men; there be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves, I mean pirates; and then there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats; I think I may take his bond.

Bass. Be assured you may.

Shy. I will be assured I may; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

Bass. If it please you to dine with us.

Shy. Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation which your prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto? Who is he comes here?

Enter Antonio.

Bass. This is Signior Antonio.

Shy. [*Aside*] How like a fawning publican he looks! I hate him for he is a Christian;

But more for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis, and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
If I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation; and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Curséd be my tribe,
If I forgive him!

Bass. Shylock, do you hear?

Shy. I am debating of my present store;
And, by the near guess of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,
Will furnish me. But soft! how many months
Do you desire? [*To Ant.*] Rest you fair, good signior;
Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

Ant. Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow
By taking nor by giving of excess,
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I'll break a custom. Is he yet possessed
How much ye would?

Shy. Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

Ant. And for three months.

Shy. I had forgot; three months, you told me so.
Well then, your bond; and let me see; but hear you;

Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow
Upon advantage.

Ant. I do never use it.

Shy. When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's sheep,—
This Jacob from our holy Abram was,
As his wise mother wrought in his behalf,
The third possessor; ay, he was the third,—

Ant. And what of him? did he take interest?

Shy. No, not take interest, not, as you would say,
Directly interest. Mark what Jacob did.
When Laban and himself were compromised
That all the eanlings which were streaked and pied
Should fall as Jacob's hire,

. . . . . .

The skilful shepherd peeled me certain wands,
And stuck them up before the fulsome ewes,
Who . . . did in eaning time
Fall parti-colored lambs, and those were Jacob's.
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest;
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

Ant. This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for;
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,
But swayed and fashioned by the hand of heaven.
Was this inserted to make interest good?
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?

Shy. I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast.
But note me, signior.

Ant. Mark you this, Bassanio,
The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.
An evil soul producing holy witness

Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,
A goodly apple rotten at the heart.
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!

Shy. Three thousand ducats; 'tis a good round sum.
Three months from twelve; then, let me see; the rate—

Ant. Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you?

Shy. Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances.
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And sit upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help.
Go to, then! you come to me, and you say,
"Shylock, we would have moneys;" you say so,—
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold; moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say,
"Hath a dog money? is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?" Or
Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key,
With bated breath and whispering humbleness,
Say this:
"Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;
You spurned me such a day; another time
You called me dog; and for these courtesies

I'll lend you thus much moneys"?

Ant. I am as like to call thee so again,
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friends; for when did friendship take
A breed for barren metal of his friend?
But lend it rather to thine enemy,
Who if he break, thou mayest with better face
Exact the penalty.

Shy. Why, look you, how you storm!
I would be friends with you, and have your love,
Forget the shames that you have stained me with,
Supply your present wants, and take no doit
Of usance for my moneys, and you'll not hear me.
This is kind I offer.

Bass. This were kindness.

Shy. This kindness will I show.
Go with me to a notary, seal me there
Your single bond; and in a merry sport,
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum or sums as are
Expressed in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body pleaseth me.

Ant. Content, i' faith; I'll seal to such a bond,
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.

Bass. You shall not seal to such a bond for me;
I'll rather dwell in my necessity.

Ant. Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it.

Within these two months, that's a month before
This bond expires, I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

Shy. O father Abram, what these Christians are,
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect
The thoughts of others! Pray you, tell me this:
If he should break his day, what should I gain
By the exaction of the forfeiture?
A pound of man's flesh taken from a man
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,
As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,
To buy his favor, I extend this friendship.
If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

Ant. Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

Shy. Then meet me forthwith at the notary's;
Give him direction for this merry bond;
And I will go and purse the ducats straight;
See to my house, left in the fearful guard
Of an unthrifty knave; and presently
I will be with you.

Ant. Hie thee, gentle Jew. [*Exit Shylock.*
The Hebrew will turn Christian; he grows kind.

Bass. I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.

Ant. Come on; in this there can be no dismay;
My ships come home a month before the day.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT SECOND

Scene I

Belmont. A room in Portia's house.

Flourish of cornets. Enter the Prince of Morocco *and his train;* Portia, Nerissa, *and others attending.*

Mor. Mislike me not for my complexion,
The shadowed livery of the burnished sun,
To whom I am a neighbor and near bred.
Bring me the fairest creature northward born,
Where Phœbus' fire scarce thaws the icicles,
And let us make incision for your love,
To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.
I tell thee, lady, this aspéct of mine
Hath feared the valiant. By my love, I swear
The best-regarded virgins of our clime
Hath loved it too. I would not change this hue,
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.
Por. In terms of choice I am not solely led
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes;
Besides, the lottery of my destiny
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing.
But if my father had not scanted me
And hedged me by his wit, to yield myself
His wife who wins me by that means I told you,
Yourself, renownéd prince, then stood as fair
As any comer I have looked on yet
For my affection.

Mor. Even for that I thank you;
Therefore, I pray you, lead me to the caskets,
To try my fortune. By this scimitar
That slew the Sophy and a Persian prince
That won three fields of Sultan Solyman,
I would outstare the sternest eyes that look,
Outbrave the heart most daring on the earth,
Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,
Yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey,
To win thee, lady. But, alas the while!
If Hercules and Lichas play at dice
Which is the better man, the greater throw
May turn by fortune from the weaker hand.
So is Alcides beaten by his page;
And so may I, blind fortune leading me,
Miss that which one unworthier may attain,
And die with grieving.

Por. You must take your chance,
And either not attempt to choose at all,
Or swear before you choose, if you choose wrong,
Never to speak to lady afterward
In way of marriage; therefore be advised.

Mor. Nor will not. Come, bring me unto my chance.

Por. First, forward to the temple. After dinner
Your hazard shall be made.

Mor. Good fortune then!
To make me blest or cursed'st among men.

[*Cornets and exeunt.*

Scene II

Venice. A street.

Enter Launcelot.

Laun. Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow, and tempts me, saying to me, "Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot," or "good Gobbo," or "good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away." My conscience says, "No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo," or, as aforesaid, "honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels." Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack. "Via!" says the fiend; "away!" says the fiend; "for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind," says the fiend, "and run." Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me, "My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son,"—or rather an honest woman's son; —for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste;— well, my conscience says, "Launcelot, budge not." "Budge," says the fiend. "Budge not," says my conscience. "Conscience," say I, "you counsel well;" "Fiend," say I, "you counsel

well." To be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of devil; and, to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnal; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel. I will run, fiend; my heels are at your command; I will run.

Enter Old Gobbo, *with a basket.*

Gob. Master young man, you, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun. [*Aside*] O heavens, this is my true-begotten father! who, being more than sand-blind, high-gravel blind, knows me not. I will try confusions with him.

Gob. Master young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun. Turn up on your right hand at the next turning, but, at the next turning of all, on your left; marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

Gob. By God's sonties, 'twill be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no?

Laun. Talk you of young Master Launcelot? [*Aside*] Mark me now; now will I raise the waters. Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

Gob. No master, sir, but a poor man's son. His father, though I say it, is an honest exceeding poor man, and, God be thanked, well to live.

Laun. Well, let his father be what a' will, we talk of young Master Launcelot.

Gob. Your worship's friend, and Launcelot, sir.

Laun. But I pray you, ergo, old man, ergo, I beseech you, talk you of young Master Launcelot?

Gob. Of Launcelot, an't please your mastership.

Laun. Ergo, Master Launcelot. Talk not of Master Launcelot, father; for the young gentleman, according to Fates and Destinies and such odd sayings, the Sisters Three and such branches of learning, is indeed deceased, or, as you would say in plain terms, gone to heaven.

Gob. Marry, God forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

Laun. [*Aside*] Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop? [*Aloud*] Do you know me, father?

Gob. Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman; but, I pray you, tell me, is my boy, God rest his soul, alive or dead?

Laun. Do you not know me, father?

Gob. Alack, sir, I am sand-blind; I know you not.

Laun. Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me; it is a wise father that

knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son. Give me your blessing; truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long; a man's son may, but, in the end, truth will out.

Gob. Pray you, sir, stand up. I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy.

Laun. Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing. I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

Gob. I cannot think you are my son.

Laun. I know not what I shall think of that; but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man; and I am sure Margery your wife is my mother.

Gob. Her name is Margery, indeed. I'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshipped might he be! what a beard hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy chin than Dobbin my fill-horse has on his tail.

Laun. It should seem, then, that Dobbin's tail grows backward. I am sure he had more hair of his tail than I have of my face when I last saw him.

Gob. Lord, how art thou changed! How dost thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present. How 'gree you now?

Laun. Well, well; but, for mine own part, as I have set up my rest to run away, so I will not rest

till I have run some ground. My master's a very Jew. Give him a present! give him a halter. I am famished in his service; you may tell every finger I have with my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come; give me your present to one Master Bassanio, who, indeed, gives rare new liveries. If I serve not him, I will run as far as God has any ground. O rare fortune! here comes the man. To him, father; for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer.

Enter Bassanio, *with* Leonardo *and other followers.*

Bass. You may do so; but let it be so hasted that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock. See these letters delivered; put the liveries to making; and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging. [*Exit a Servant.*

Laun. To him, father.

Gob. God bless your worship!

Bass. Gramercy! wouldst thou aught with me?

Gob. Here's my son, sir, a poor boy,—

Laun. Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man; that would, sir,—as my father shall specify,—

Gob. He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve—

Laun. Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and have a desire,—as my father shall specify,—

Gob. His master and he, saving your worship's reverence, are scarce cater-cousins—

Laun. To be brief, the very truth is that the Jew having done me wrong, doth cause me,—as my father, being, I hope, an old man, shall frutify unto you,—

Gob. I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship, and my suit is—

Laun. In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as your worship shall know by this honest old man; and, though I say it, though old man, yet poor man, my father.

Bass. One speak for both. What would you?

Laun. Serve you, sir.

Gob. That is the very defect of the matter, sir.

Bass. I know thee well; thou hast obtained thy suit.
Shylock thy master spoke with me this day,
And hath preferred thee, if it be preferment
To leave a rich Jew's service, to become
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

Laun. The old proverb is very well parted between my master Shylock and you, sir: you have the grace of God, sir, and he hath enough.

Bass. Thou speak'st it well. Go, father with thy son.
Take leave of thy old master, and inquire
My lodging out. Give him a livery
More guarded than his fellows'; see it done.

Laun. Father, in. I cannot get a service, no; I have ne'er a tongue in my head. [*Looks at his palm.*] Well, if any man in Italy have a fairer

table which doth offer to swear upon a book, I shall have good fortune. Go to, here's a simple line of life! Here's a small trifle of wives! Alas, fifteen wives is nothing! Eleven widows and nine maids is a simple coming-in for one man. And then to escape drowning thrice, and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed; here are simple scapes. Well, if Fortune be a woman, she's a good wench for this gear. Father, come; I'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye.

[*Exeunt Launcelot and old Gobbo.*

Bass. I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this:
These things being bought and orderly bestowed,
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night
My best-esteemed acquaintance. Hie thee, go.

Leon. My best endeavors shall be done herein.

Enter Gratiano.

Gra. Where is your master?

Leon. Yonder, sir, he walks. [*Exit.*

Gra. Signior Bassanio,—

Bass. Gratiano!

Gra. I have a suit to you.

Bass. You have obtained it.

Gra. You must not deny me; I must go with you to Belmont.

Bass. Why, then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano;
Thou art too wild, too rude, and bold of voice;

Parts that become thee happily enough,
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;
But where thou art not known, why there they show
Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain
To allay with some cold drops of modesty
Thy skipping spirit, lest, through thy wild behavior
I be misconstrued in the place I go to,
And lose my hopes.

Gra. Signior Bassanio, hear me.
If I do not put on a sober habit,
Talk with respect, and swear but now and then,
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely,
Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes
Thus with my hat, and sigh, and say "amen,"
Use all the observance of civility,
Like one well studied in a sad ostent
To please his grandam, never trust me more.

Bass. Well, we shall see your bearing.

Gra. Nay, but I bar to-night; you shall not gauge me
By what we do to-night.

Bass. No, that were pity.
I would entreat you rather to put on
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends
That purpose merriment. But fare you well.
I have some business.

Gra. And I must to Lorenzo and the rest;
But we will visit you at supper-time. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III

The same. A room in Shylock's house.

Enter Jessica *and* Launcelot.

Jess. I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so.
Our house is hell; and thou, a merry devil,
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.
But fare thee well, there is a ducat for thee;
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see
Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest.
Give him this letter; do it secretly;
And so farewell. I would not have my father
See me in talk with thee.

Laun. Adieu! tears exhibit my tongue. Most beautiful pagan, most sweet Jew! if a Christian do not play the knave, and get thee, I am much deceived. But, adieu! these foolish drops do somewhat drown my manly spirit. Adieu.

Jess. Farewell, good Launcelot. [*Exit Launcelot.*
Alack, what heinous sin is it in me
To be ashamed to be my father's child!
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners. O Lorenzo,
If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife,
Become a Christian, and thy loving wife. [*Exit.*

Scene IV

The same. A street.

Enter Gratiano, Lorenzo, Salarino, *and* Salanio.

Lor. Nay, we will slink away in supper-time,
Disguise us at my lodging, and return
All in an hour.
Gra. We have not made good preparation.
Salar. We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers.
Salan. 'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly ordered,
And better in my mind not undertook.
Lor. 'Tis now but four o'clock; we have two hours
To furnish us.

Enter Launcelot, *with a letter.*

Friend Launcelot, what's the news?
Laun. An it shall please you to break up this, it shall seem to signify.
Lor. I know the hand; in faith, 'tis a fair hand;
And whiter than the paper it writ on
Is the fair hand that writ.
Gra. Love-news, in faith.
Laun. By your leave, sir.
Lor. Whither goest thou?
Laun. Marry, sir, to bid my old master the Jew to sup to-night with my new master the Christian.

Lor. Hold here, take this. Tell gentle Jessica
I will not fail her; speak it privately; go.
Gentlemen, [*Exit Launcelot.*
Will you prepare you for this masque to-night?
I am provided of a torch-bearer.
Salar. Ay, marry, I'll begone about it straight.
Salan. And so will I.
Lor. Meet me and Gratiano
At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.
Salar. 'Tis good we do so. [*Exeunt Salar. and Salan.*
Gra. Was not that letter from fair Jessica?
Lor. I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed
How I shall take her from her father's house;
What gold and jewels she is furnished with;
What page's suit she hath in readiness.
If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,
It will be for his gentle daughter's sake;
And never dare misfortune cross her foot,
Unless she do it under this excuse,
That she is issue to a faithless Jew.
Come, go with me; peruse this as thou goest.
Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V

The same. Before Shylock's house.

Enter Shylock *and* Launcelot.

Shy. Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy judge,
The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio.

What, Jessica!—thou shalt not gormandize,
As thou hast done with me.—What, Jessica!—
And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out;—
Why, Jessica, I say!

Laun. Why, Jessica!

Shy. Who bids thee call? I do not bid thee call.

Laun. Your worship was wont to tell me that I could do nothing without bidding.

Enter Jessica.

Jes. Call you? what is your will?

Shy. I am bid forth to supper, Jessica.
There are my keys. But wherefore should I go?
I am not bid for love; they flatter me;
But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon
The prodigal Christian. Jessica, my girl,
Look to my house. I am right loath to go.
There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest,
For I did dream of money-bags to-night.

Laun. I beseech you, sir, go. My young master doth expect your reproach.

Shy. So do I his.

Laun. And they have conspired together. I will not say you shall see a masque; but if you do, then it was not for nothing that my nose fell a-bleeding on Black Monday last at six o'clock i' the morning, falling out that year on Ash Wednesday was four year, in the afternoon.

Shy. What, are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica.

Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum,
And the vile squealing of the wry-necked fife,
Clamber not you up to the casements then,
Nor thrust your head into the public street
To gaze on Christian fools with varnished faces;
But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements;
Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter
My sober house. By Jacob's staff I swear
I have no mind of feasting forth to-night;
But I will go. Go you before me, sirrah;
Say I will come.

Laun. I will go before, sir. Mistress, look out at window, for all this;
There will come a Christian by,
Will be worth a Jewess' eye. [*Exit.*

Shy. What says that fool of Hagar's offspring, ha?

Jes. His words were, "Farewell, mistress!" nothing else.

Shy. The patch is kind enough, but a huge feeder;
Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day
More than the wild-cat. Drones hive not with me;
Therefore I part with him, and part with him
To one that I would have him help to waste
His borrowed purse. Well, Jessica, go in.
Perhaps I will return immediately.
Do as I bid you, shut doors after you.
Fast bind, fast find,
A proverb never stale in thrifty mind. [*Exit.*

Jes. Farewell; and if my fortune be not crost,
I have a father, you a daughter, lost. [*Exit.*

Scene VI

The same.

Enter Gratiano *and* Salarino, *masqued.*

Gra. This is the pent-house under which Lorenzo
Desired us to make stand.
Salar. His hour is almost past.
Gra. And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,
For lovers ever run before the clock.
Salar. O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly
To seal love's bonds new-made, than they are wont
To keep obligéd faith unforfeited!
Gra. That ever holds. Who riseth from a feast
With that keen appetite that he sits down?
Where is the horse that doth untread again
His tedious measures with the unbated fire
That he did pace them first? All things that are,
Are with more spirit chaséd than enjoyed.
How like a younker or a prodigal
The scarféd bark puts from her native bay,
Hugged and embracéd by the strumpet wind!
How like the prodigal doth she return,
With over-weathered ribs and ragged sails,
Lean, rent, and beggared by the strumpet wind!
Salar. Here comes Lorenzo; more of this hereafter.

Enter Lorenzo.

Lor. Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode;
Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait.

When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,
I'll watch as long for you then. Approach;
Here dwells my father Jew. Ho! who's within?

Enter JESSICA, *above, in boy's clothes.*

Jes. Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,
Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.
Lor. Lorenzo, and thy love.
Jes. Lorenzo, certain, and my love, indeed,
For who love I so much? And now who knows
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?
Lor. Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou art.
Jes. Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains.
I am glad 'tis night, you do not look on me,
For I am much ashamed of my exchange.
But love is blind, and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit;
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformed to a boy.
Lor. Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer.
Jes. What, must I hold a candle to my shames?
They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.
Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love;
And I should be obscured.
Lor. So are you, sweet,
Even in the lovely garnish of a boy.
But come at once;
For the close night doth play the runaway,

And we are stayed for at Bassanio's feast.
Jes. I will make fast the doors, and gild myself
With some more ducats, and be with you straight.
[*Exit above.*
Gra. Now, by my hood, a Gentile, and no Jew.
Lor. Beshrew me but I love her heartily;
For she is wise, if I can judge of her;
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true;
And true she is, as she hath proved herself;
And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true,
Shall she be placéd in my constant soul.

Enter Jessica, *below.*

What, art thou come? On, gentlemen; away!
Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.
[*Exit with Jessica and Salarino.*

Enter Antonio.

Ant. Who's there?
Gra. Signior Antonio!
Ant. Fie, fie, Gratanio! where are all the rest?
'Tis nine o'clock; our friends all stay for you.
No masque to-night; the wind is come about,
Bassanio presently will go aboard.
I have sent twenty out to seek for you.
Gra. I am glad on 't. I desire no more delight
Than to be under sail and gone to-night. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VII

Belmont. A room in Portia's house.

Flourish of cornets. Enter Portia, *with the* Prince of Morocco, *and their trains.*

Por. Go draw aside the curtains, and discover
The several caskets to this noble prince.
Now make your choice.
Mor. The first, of gold, who this inscription bears,
"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire;"
The second, silver, which this promise carries,
"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves;"
This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt,
"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath."
How shall I know if I do choose the right?
Por. The one of them contains my picture, prince;
If you choose that, then I am yours withal.
Mor. Some god direct my judgment! Let me see;
I will survey the inscriptions back again.
What says this leaden casket?
"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath."
Must give,—for what? for lead? hazard for lead?

This casket threatens. Men that hazard all
Do it in hope of fair advantages;
A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross.
I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.
What says the silver with her virgin hue?
"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves."
As much as he deserves! Pause there, Morocco,
And weigh thy value with an even hand.
If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,
Thou dost deserve enough; and yet enough
May not extend so far as to the lady;
And yet to be afeared of my deserving
Were but a weak disabling of myself.
As much as I deserve! Why, that's the lady.
I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,
In graces and in qualities of breeding;
But more than these, in love I do deserve.
What if I strayed no farther, but chose here?
Let's see once more this saying graved in gold:
"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire."
Why, that's the lady; all the world desires her;
From the four corners of the earth they come
To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint.
The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds
Of wide Arabia are as throughfares now
For princes to come view fair Portia.
The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head
Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar
To stop the foreign spirits; but they come,

As o'er a brook, to see fair Portia.
One of these three contains her heavenly picture.
Is't like that lead contains her? 'Twere damnation
To think so base a thought. It were too gross
To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.
Or shall I think in silver she's immured,
Being ten times undervalued to tried gold?
O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem
Was set in worse than gold. They have in England
A coin that bears the figure of an angel
Stamped in gold, but that's insculped upon;
But here an angel in a golden bed
Lies all within. Deliver me the key.
Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may!

Por. There, take it, prince; and if my form lie there,
Then I am yours. [*He unlocks the golden casket.*

Mor. O hell! what have we here?
A carrion Death, within whose empty eye
There is a written scroll! I'll read the writing.

[*Reads.*] All that glisters is not gold;
Often have you heard that told.
Many a man his life hath sold
But my outside to behold.
Gilded tombs do worms infold.
Had you been as wise as bold,
Young in limbs, in judgment old,
Your answer had not been inscrolled:
Fare you well; your suit is cold.
Cold, indeed, and labor lost;
Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost!

Portia, adieu. I have too grieved a heart
To take a tedious leave; thus losers part.
[*Exit with his train. Flourish of cornets.*
Por. A gentle riddance. Draw the curtains, go.
Let all of his complexion choose me so. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VIII

Venice. A street.

Enter Salarino *and* Salanio.

Salar. Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail,
With him is Gratiano gone along;
And in their ship I am sure Lorenzo is not.
Salan. The villain Jew with outcries raised the Duke,
Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.
Salar. He came too late, the ship was under sail;
But there the Duke was given to understand
That in a gondola were seen together
Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica.
Besides, Antonio certified the Duke
They were not with Bassanio in his ship.
Salan. I never heard a passion so confused,
So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets.
"My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!
Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats!
Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!
A sealéd bag, two sealéd bags of ducats,

Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter!
And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious stones,
Stolen by my daughter! Justice! find the girl!
She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats!"

Salar. Why, all the boys in Venice follow him,
Crying, his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.

Salan. Let good Antonio look he keep his day,
Or he shall pay for this.

Salar. Marry, well remembered.
I reasoned with a Frenchman yesterday,
Who told me, in the narrow seas that part
The French and English, there miscarriéd
A vessel of our country richly fraught.
I thought upon Antonio when he told me;
And wished in silence that it were not his.

Salan. You were best to tell Antonio what you hear;
Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him.

Salar. A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.
I saw Bassanio and Antonio part;
Bassanio told him he would make some speed
Of his return; he answered, "Do not so;
Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio,
But stay the very riping of the time;
And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me,
Let it not enter in your mind of love.
Be merry, and employ your chiefest thoughts
To courtship, and such fair ostents of love
As shall conveniently become you there."
And even there, his eye being big with tears,
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,

And with affection wondrous sensible
He wrung Bassanio's hand; and so they parted.
Salan. I think he only loves the world for him.
I pray thee, let us go and find him out,
And quicken his embracéd heaviness
With some delight or other.
Salar. Do we so. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IX

Belmont. A room in Portia's house.

Enter Nerissa *and a Servitor.*

Ner. Quick, quick, I pray thee; draw the curtain straight.
The Prince of Arragon hath ta'en his oath,
And comes to his election presently.

Flourish of cornets. Enter the Prince of Arragon, Portia, *and their trains.*

Por. Behold, there stand the caskets, noble prince.
If you choose that wherein I am contained,
Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemnized;
But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,
You must be gone from hence immediately.
Ar. I am enjoined by oath to observe three things:
First, never to unfold to any one
Which casket 'twas I chose; next, if I fail
Of the right casket, never in my life

To woo a maid in way of marriage;
Lastly,
If I do fail in fortune of my choice,
Immediately to leave you and be gone.

Por. To these injunctions every one doth swear
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

Ar. And so have I addressed me. Fortune now
To my heart's hope! Gold; silver; and base lead.
"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath."
You shall look fairer, ere I give or hazard.
What says the golden chest? ha! let me see:
"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire."
What many men desire! that "many" may be meant
By the fool multitude, that choose by show,
Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach;
Which pries not to the interior, but, like the martlet,
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,
Even in the force and road of casualty.
I will not choose what many men desire,
Because I will not jump with common spirits,
And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.
Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house;
Tell me once more what title thou dost bear:
"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves."
And well said too; for who shall go about
To cozen fortune, and be honorable
Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume
To wear an undeserved dignity,

O, that estates, degrees and offices
Were not derived corruptly, and that clear honor
Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!
How many then should cover that stand bare!
How many be commanded that command!
How much low peasantry would then be gleaned
From the true seed of honor! and how much honor
Picked from the chaff and ruin of the times,
To be new-varnished! Well, but to my choice.
"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves."
I will assume desert. Give me a key for this,
And instantly unlock my fortunes here.

[*He opens the silver casket.*

Por. [*Aside*] Too long a pause for that which you find there.

Ar. What's here? The portrait of a blinking idiot,
Presenting me a schedule! I will read it.
How much unlike art thou to Portia!
How much unlike my hopes and my deservings!
"Who chooseth me shall have as much as he deserves."
Did I deserve no more than a fool's head?
Is that my prize? Are my deserts no better?

Por. To offend and judge are distinct offices,
And of opposéd natures.

Ar. What is here?
[*Reads.*] The fire seven times triéd this;
Seven times tried that judgment is,
That did never choose amiss.
Some there be that shadows kiss,

Such have but a shadow's bliss.
There be fools alive, I wis,
Silvered o'er; and so was this.
Take what wife you will to bed,
I will ever be your head.
So be gone; you are sped.

Still more fool I shall appear
By the time I linger here.
With one fool's head I came to woo,
But I go away with two.
Sweet, adieu. I'll keep my oath,
Patiently to bear my wroth.

[*Exeunt Arragon and train.*

Por. Thus hath the candle singed the moth.
O, these deliberate fools! when they do choose,
They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

Ner. The ancient saying is no heresy,
Hanging and wiving goes by destiny.

Por. Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Where is my lady?

Por. Here; what would my lord?

Serv. Madam, there is alighted at your gate
A young Venetian, one that comes before
To signify the approaching of his lord;
From whom he bringeth sensible regreets,
To wit, besides commends and courteous breath,

Gifts of rich value. Yet I have not seen
So likely an ambassador of love.
A day in April never came so sweet,
To show how costly summer was at hand,
As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord.

Por. No more, I pray thee. I am half afeard
Thou wilt say anon he is some kin to thee,
Thou spend'st such high-day wit in praising him.
Come, come, Nerissa, for I long to see
Quick Cupid's post that comes so mannerly.

Ner. Bassanio, lord Love, if thy will it be! [*Exeunt.*

ACT THIRD

Scene I

Venice. A street.

Enter Salanio *and* Salarino.

Salan. Now, what news on the Rialto?

Salar. Why, yet it lives there unchecked that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wrecked on the narrow seas; the Goodwins, I think they call the place; a very dangerous flat and fatal, where the carcases of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip Report be an honest woman of her word.

Salan. I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapped ginger, or made her neighbors

believe she wept for the death of a third husband. But it is true, without any slips of prolixity, or crossing the plain highway of talk, that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio,— O that I had a title good enough to keep his name company!—

Salar. Come, the full stop.

Salan. Ha! what sayest thou? Why, the end is, he hath lost a ship.

Salar. I would it might prove the end of his losses.

Salan. Let me say "Amen" betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.

Enter Shylock.

How now, Shylock! what news among the merchants?

Shy. You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight.

Salar. That's certain. I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

Salan. And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam.

Shy. She is damned for it.

Salar. That's certain, if the devil may be her judge.

Shy. My own flesh and blood to rebel! . . .

Salar. There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory; more between your bloods than there is between red wine and rhenish. But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?

Shy. There I have another bad match. A bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar, that was used to come so smug upon the mart; let him look to his bond. He was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond. He was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; let him look to his bond.

Salar. Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh. What's that good for?

Shy. To bait fish withal. If it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions; fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we

will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villany you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Gentlemen, my master Antonio is at his house, and desires to speak with you both.

Salar. We have been up and down to seek him.

Enter Tubal.

Salan. Here comes another of the tribe; a third cannot be matched, unless the devil himself turn Jew. [*Exeunt Salan. Salar. and Servant.*

Shy. How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter?

Tub. I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

Shy. Why, there, there, there, there! A diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now. I never felt it till now. Two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! Would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them? Why so?—and I

know not what's spent in the search. Why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge, nor no ill luck stirring but what lights on my shoulders; no sighs but of my breathing, no tears but of my shedding.

Tub. Yes, other men have ill luck too. Antonio, as I heard in Genoa,—

Shy. What, what, what? Ill luck, ill luck?

Tub. Hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.

Shy. I thank God, I thank God! Is it true, is it true?

Tub. I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.

Shy. I thank thee, good Tubal; good news, good news! Ha, ha! Here in Genoa!

Tub. Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, in one night fourscore ducats.

Shy. Thou stick'st a dagger in me. I shall never see my gold again. Fourscore ducats at a sitting! Fourscore ducats!

Tub. There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

Shy. I am very glad of it. I'll plague him; I'll torture him. I am glad of it.

Tub. One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Shy. Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal.

It was my turquoise; I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor. I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

Tub. But Antonio is certainly undone.

Shy. Nay, that's true, that's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise I will. Go, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II

Belmont. A room in Portia's house.

Enter Bassanio, Portia, Gratiano, Nerissa, *and Attendants.*

Por. I pray you, tarry. Pause a day or two
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,
I lose your company; therefore forbear awhile.
There's something tells me, but it is not love,
I would not lose you; and you know yourself,
Hate counsels not in such a quality.
But lest you should not understand me well,—
And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought,—
I would detain you here some month or two
Before you venture for me. I could teach you

How to choose right, but then I am forsworn;
So will I never be; so may you miss me;
But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,
That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes,
They have o'er-looked me, and divided me;
One half of me is yours, the other half yours,
Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours,
And so all yours! O, these naughty times
Put bars between the owners and their rights!
And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so,
Let fortune go to hell for it, not I.
I speak too long; but 'tis to peize the time,
To eke it and to draw it out in length,
To stay you from election.

Bass. Let me choose;
For as I am, I live upon the rack.

Por. Upon the rack, Bassanio! then confess
What treason there is mingled with your love.

Bass. None but that ugly treason of mistrust,
Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love.
There may as well be amity and life
'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.

Por. Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,
Where men enforcéd do speak any thing.

Bass. Promise me life, and I'll confess the truth.

Por. Well then, confess and live.

Bass. "Confess, and love,"
Had been the very sum of my confession.
O happy torment, when my torturer
Doth teach me answers for deliverance!

But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

Por. Away, then! I am locked in one of them;
If you do love me, you will find me out.
Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.
Let music sound while he doth make his choice;
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music. That the comparison
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream,
And watery death-bed for him. He may win;
And what is music then? Then music is
Even as the flourish when true subjects bow
To a new-crownéd monarch; such it is
As are those dulcet sounds in break of day
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear,
And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,
With no less presence, but with much more love,
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy
To the sea-monster. I stand for sacrifice;
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,
With blearéd visages, come forth to view
The issue of the exploit. Go, Hercules!
Live thou, I live. With much, much more dismay
I view the fight than thou that mak'st the fray.

A song whilst Bassanio comments on the caskets to himself.

Song.

Tell me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart or in the head?

How begot, how nourishéd?
Reply, reply.
It is engendered in the eyes,
With gazing fed; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.
Let us all ring fancy's knell;
I'll begin it,—Ding, dong, bell.

All. Ding, dong, bell.

Bass. So may the outward shows be least themselves;
The world is still deceived with ornament.
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,
But, being seasoned with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
What damnéd error, but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
There is no vice so simple, but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.
How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars,
Who, inward searched, have livers white as milk;
And these assume but valor's excrement
To render them redoubted! Look on beauty,
And you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight;
Which therein works a miracle in nature,
Making them lightest that wear most of it.
So are those crispéd snaky golden locks
Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,
Upon supposéd fairness, often known

To be the dowry of a second head,
The skull that bred them in the sepulcher.
Thus ornament is but the guilèd shore
To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf
Veiling an Indian beauty; in a word,
The seeming truth which cunning times put on
To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee;
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge
'Tween man and man. But thou, thou meager lead,
Which rather threatenest than dost promise aught,
Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence;
And here choose I. Joy be the consequence!

Por. [*Aside*] How all the other passions fleet to air,
As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,
And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy!
O love, be moderate; allay thy esctasy;
In measure rain thy joy; scant this excess!
I feel too much thy blessing; make it less,
For fear I surfeit!

Bass. What find I here?
[*Opening the leaden casket.*
Fair Portia's counterfeit! What demi-god
Hath come so near creation? Move these eyes?
Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,
Seem they in motion? Here are severed lips,
Parted with sugar breath; so sweet a bar
Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her hairs
The painter plays the spider, and hath woven
A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men

Faster than gnats in cobwebs. But her eyes,—
How could he see to do them? Having made one,
Methinks it should have power to steal both his
And leave itself unfurnished. Yet look, how far
The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow
In underprizing it, so far this shadow
Doth limp behind the substance. Here's the scroll,
The continent and summary of my fortune.
[*Reads.*] You that choose not by the view,
Chance as fair, and choose as true!
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content and seek no new.
If you be well pleased with this,
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is,
And claim her with a loving kiss.
A gentle scroll. Fair lady, by your leave;
I come by note, to give and to receive.
Like one of two contending in a prize,
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,
Hearing applause and universal shout,
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt
Whether those peals of praise be his or no;
So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so;
As doubtful whether what I see be true,
Until confirmed, signed, ratified by you.
Por. You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
Such as I am. Though for myself alone
I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better; yet, for you

I would be trebled twenty times myself,
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
More rich;
That only to stand high in your account,
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account. But the full sum of me
Is sum of something, which, to term in gross,
Is an unlessoned girl, unschooled, unpractised;
Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn; happier than this,
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;
Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours to be directed,
As from her lord, her governor, her king.
Myself and what is mine to you and yours
Is now converted. But now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,
This house, these servants, and this same myself,
Are yours, my lord; I give them with this ring;
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love,
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

Bass. Madam, you have bereft me of all words,
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins;
And there is such confusion in my powers,
As, after some oration fairly spoke
By a beloved prince, there doth appear
Among the buzzing pleased multitude;
Where every something, being blent together,

Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,
Expressed and not expressed. But when this ring
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence;
O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead!

Ner. My lord and lady, it is now our time,
That have stood by and seen our wishes prosper,
To cry, good joy. Good joy, my lord and lady!

Gra. My lord Bassanio and my gentle lady,
I wish you all the joy that you can wish;
For I am sure you can wish none from me;
And when your honors mean to solemnize
The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you,
Even at that time I may be married too.

Bass. With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.

Gra. I thank your lordship, you have got me one.
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours.
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;
You loved, I loved; for intermission
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.
Your fortune stood upon the casket there,
And so did mine too, as the matter falls;
For, wooing here until I sweat again,
And swearing till my very roof was dry
With oaths of love, at last, if promise last,
I got a promise of this fair one here
To have her love, provided that your fortune
Achieved her mistress.

Por. Is this true, Nerissa?

Ner. Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal.

Bass. And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?

Gra. Yes, faith, my lord.

Bass. Our feast shall be much honored in your marriage. . . .

Gra. But who comes here? Lorenzo and his infidel? 221
What, and my old Venetian friend Salerio?

Enter Lorenzo, Jessica, *and* Salerio, *a Messenger from Venice.*

Bass. Lorenzo and Salerio, welcome hither;
If that the youth of my new interest here
Have power to bid you welcome. By your leave,
I bid my very friends and countrymen,
Sweet Portia, welcome.

Por. So do I, my lord;
They are entirely welcome.

Lor. I thank your honor. For my part, my lord,
My purpose was not to have seen you here; 230
But meeting with Salerio by the way,
He did entreat me, past all saying nay,
To come with him along.

Saler. I did, my lord;
And I have reason for it. Signior Antonio
Commends him to you. [*Gives Bassanio a letter.*

Bass. Ere I ope his letter,
I pray you, tell me how my good friend doth.

Saler. Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind,
Nor well, unless in mind. His letter there
Will show you his estate.

Gra. Nerissa, cheer yon stranger; bid her welcome.
Your hand, Salerio. What's the news from Venice?
How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?
I know he will be glad of our success;
We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.
Saler. I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost.
Por. There are some shrewd contents in yon same paper,
That steals the color from Bassanio's cheek.
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world
Could turn so much the constitution
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse!
With leave, Bassanio; I am half yourself,
And I must freely have the half of anything
That this same paper brings you.
Bass. O sweet Portia,
Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words
That ever blotted paper! Gentle lady,
When I did first impart my love to you,
I freely told you, all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins, I was a gentleman;
And then I told you true; and yet, dear lady,
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see
How much I was a braggart. When I told you
My state was nothing, I should then have told you
That I was worse than nothing; for, indeed,
I have engaged myself to a dear friend,
Engaged my friend to his mere enemy,
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady;
The paper as the body of my friend,
And every word in it a gaping wound,

Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Salerio?
Have all his ventures failed? What, not one hit?
From Tripolis, from Mexico, and England,
From Lisbon, Barbary, and India?
And not one vessel scape the dreadful touch
Of merchant-marring rocks?

Saler. Not one, my lord.
Besides, it should appear, that if he had
The present money to discharge the Jew,
He would not take it. Never did I know
A creature, that did bear the shape of man,
So keen and greedy to confound a man.
He plies the Duke at morning and at night,
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,
If they deny him justice. Twenty merchants,
The Duke himself, and the magnificoes
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;
But none can drive him from the envious plea
Of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond.

Jes. When I was with him I have heard him swear
To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen,
That he would rather have Antonio's flesh
Than twenty times the value of the sum
That he did owe him; and I know, my lord,
If law, authority and power deny not,
It will go hard with poor Antonio.

Por. Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?

Bass. The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best-conditioned and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies; and one in whom

The ancient Roman honor more appears
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

Por. What sum owes he the Jew?

Bass. For me three thousand ducats.

Por. What, no more?
Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;
Double six thousand, and then treble that,
Before a friend of this description
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.
First go with me to church and call me wife,
And then away to Venice to your friend;
For never shall you lie by Portia's side
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold
To pay the petty debt twenty times over.
When it is paid, bring your true friend along.
My maid Nerissa and myself meantime
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away!
For you shall hence upon your wedding-day.
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer;
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

Bass. [*Reads.*] Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and I, if I might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use your pleasure; if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.

Por. O love, dispatch all business, and be gone!

Bass. Since I have your good leave to go away,
I will make haste; but, till I come again
No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,
No rest be interposer 'twixt us twain.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene III

Venice. A street.

Enter Shylock, Salarino, Antonio, *and Jailer.*

Shy. Jailer, look to him; tell not me of mercy.
This is the fool that lent out money gratis.
Jailer, look to him.
Ant. Hear me yet, good Shylock.
Shy. I'll have my bond; speak not against my bond.
I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.
Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause;
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs.
The Duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,
Thou naughty jailer, that thou art so fond
To come abroad with him at his request.
Ant. I pray thee, hear me speak.
Shy. I'll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak.
I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.
I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield
To Christian intercessors. Follow not;
I'll have no speaking; I will have my bond. [*Exit.*
Salar. It is the most impenetrable cur
That ever kept with men.

Ant. Let him alone;
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.
He seeks my life; his reason well I know.
I oft delivered from his forfeitures
Many that have at times made moan to me;
Therefore he hates me.
Salar. I am sure the Duke
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.
Ant. The Duke cannot deny the course of law;
For the commodity that strangers have
With us in Venice, if it be denied,
Will much impeach the justice of his state,
Since that the trade and profit of the city
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go.
These griefs and losses have so bated me,
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.
Well, jailer, on. Pray God, Bassanio come
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not!
[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV

Belmont. A room in Portia's house.

Enter Portia, Nerissa, Lorenzo, Jessica, *and* Balthasar.

Lor. Madam, although I speak it in your presence,
You have a noble and a true conceit

Of god-like amity, which appears most strongly
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But if you knew to whom you show this honor,
How true a gentleman you send relief,
How dear a lover of my lord your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the work
Than customary bounty can enforce you.
Por. I never did repent for doing good,
Nor shall not now; for in companions
That do converse and waste the time together,
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,
There must be needs a like proportion
Of lineaments, of manners and of spirit;
Which makes me think that this Antonio,
Being the bosom lover of my lord,
Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,
How little is the cost I have bestowed
In purchasing the semblance of my soul
From out the state of hellish misery!
This comes too near the praising of myself;
Therefore no more of it. Hear other things.
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
The husbandry and manage of my house
Until my lord's return. For mine own part,
I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow
To live in prayer and contemplation,
Only attended by Nerissa here,
Until her husband and my lord's return.
There is a monastery two miles off;
And there will we abide. I do desire you

Not to deny this imposition;
The which my love and some necessity
Now lays upon you.

Lor. Madam, with all my heart
I shall obey you in all fair commands.

Por. My people do already know my mind,
And will acknowledge you and Jessica
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.
And so farewell till we shall meet again.

Lor. Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you!

Jes. I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

Por. I thank you for your wish, and am well pleased
To wish it back on you. Fare you well, Jessica.
[*Exeunt Jessica and Lorenzo.*
Now, Balthasar,
As I have ever found thee honest-true,
So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,
And use thou all the endeavor of a man
In speed to Padua. See thou render this
Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario;
And, look, what notes and garments he doth give thee,
Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed
Unto the traject, to the common ferry
Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,
But get thee gone. I shall be there before thee.

Balth. Madam, I go with all convenient speed. [*Exit.*

Por. Come on, Nerissa; I have work in hand
That you yet know not of; we'll see our husbands
Before they think of us.

Ner. Shall they see us?

Por. They shall, Nerissa; but in such a habit,
That they shall think we are accomplishéd
With that we lack. I'll hold thee any wager,
When we are both accoutred like young men,
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with the braver grace,
And speak between the change of man and boy
With a reed voice, and turn two mincing steps
Into a manly stride, and speak of frays
Like a fine bragging youth, and tell quaint lies,
How honorable ladies sought my love,
Which I denying, they fell sick and died.
I could not do withal. Then I'll repent,
And wish, for all that, that I had not killed them;
And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,
That men shall swear I have discontinued school
Above a twelvemonth. I have within my mind
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,
Which I will practise.

Ner. Why, shall we turn to men?

Por. Fie, what a question's that! . . .
But come, I'll tell thee all my whole device
When I am in my coach, which stays for us
At the park-gate; and therefore haste away,
For we must measure twenty miles to-day. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V

The same. A garden.

Enter Launcelot *and* Jessica.

Laun. Yes, truly; for, look you, the sins of the father are to be laid upon the children; therefore, I promise ye, I fear you. I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation of the matter; therefore be of good cheer, for, truly, I think you are damned. There is but one hope in it that can do you any good; and that is but a kind of bastard hope neither.

Jes. And what hope is that, I pray thee?

Laun. Marry, you may partly hope . . . . . that you are not the Jew's daughter.

Jes. That were a kind of hope, indeed; so the sins of my mother should be visited upon me.

Laun. Truly then I fear you are damned both by father and mother; thus when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother. Well, you are gone both ways.

Jes. I shall be saved by my husband; he hath made me a Christian.

Laun. Truly, the more to blame he; we were Christians enow before, e'en as many as could

well live, one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs. If we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money.

Enter Lorenzo.

Jes. I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say. Here he comes.

Lor. I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners.

Jes. Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo; Launcelot and I are out. He tells me flatly, there is no mercy for me in heaven, because I am a Jew's daughter; and he says, you are no good member of the commonwealth, for, in converting Jews to Christians, you raise the price of pork. . . .

Lor. How every fool can play upon the word! I think the best grace of wit will shortly turn into silence, and discourse grow commendable in none only but parrots. Go in, sirrah; bid them prepare for dinner.

Laun. That is done, sir; they have all stomachs.

Lor. Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper are you! then bid them prepare dinner.

Laun. That is done, too, sir; only cover is the word.

Lor. Will you cover, then, sir?

Laun. Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty.

Lor. Yet more quarrelling with occasion! Wilt

thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant? I pray thee, understand a plain man in his plain meaning: go to thy fellows; bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner.

Laun. For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for the meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as as humors and conceits shall govern. [*Exit.*

Lor. O dear discretion, how his words are suited!
The fool hath planted in his memory
An army of good words; and I do know
A many fools, that stand in better place,
Garnished like him, that for a tricksy word
Defy the matter. How far'st thou, Jessica?
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion,
How dost thou like the Lord Bassanio's wife?

Jes. Past all expressing. It is very meet
The Lord Bassanio live an upright life;
For, having such a blessing in his lady,
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth;
And, if on earth he do not mean it, then
In reason he should never come to heaven.
Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match
And on the wager lay two earthly women,
And Portia one, there must be something else
Pawned with the other, for the poor rude world
Hath not her fellow.

Lor. Even such a husband
Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.

Jes. Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.
Lor. I will anon; first, let us go to dinner.
Jes. Nay, let me praise you while I have a stomach.
Lor. No, pray thee, let it serve for table-talk;
Then, howsoe'er thou speak'st, 'mong other things
I shall digest it.
Jes. Well, I'll set you forth. [*Exeunt.*

ACT FOURTH

Scene I

Venice. A court of justice.

Enter the Duke, *the Magnificoes,* Antonio, Bassanio, Gratiano, Salerio, *and others.*

Duke. What, is Antonio here?
Ant. Ready, so please your Grace.
Duke. I am sorry for thee. Thou art come to answer
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
Uncapable of pity, void and empty
From any dram of mercy.
Ant. I have heard
Your Grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate,
And that no lawful means can carry me
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose
My patience to his fury, and am armed

To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,
The very tyranny and rage of his.

Duke. Go one, and call the Jew into the court.

Saler. He is ready at the door; he comes, my lord.

Enter Shylock.

Duke. Make room, and let him stand before our face.
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice
To the last hour of act; and then 'tis thought
Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty;
And where thou now exact'st the penalty,
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,
But, touched with húmane gentleness and love,
Forgive a moiety of the principal;
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,
That have of late so huddled on his back,
Enow to press a royal merchant down,
And pluck commiseration of his state
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never trained
To offices of tender courtesy.
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

Shy. I have possessed your Grace of what I purpose;
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond.
If you deny it, let the danger light

Upon your charter and your city's freedom.
You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion-flesh than to receive
Three thousand ducats. I'll not answer that;
But say, it is my humor. Is it answered?
What if my house be troubled with a rat,
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
To have it baned? What, are you answered yet?
Some men there are love not a gaping pig;
Some, that are mad if they behold a cat;
And others, when the bagpipe sings i' the nose;
. . . . . for affection,
Master of passion, sways it to the mood
Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for your answer,
As there is no firm reason to be rendered,
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;
Why he, a harmless necessary cat;
Why he, a woollen bag-pipe; but of force
Must yield to such inevitable shame
As to offend, himself being offended;
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,
More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus
A losing suit against him. Are you answered?

Bass. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

Shy. I am not bound to please thee with my answer.

Bass. Do all men kill the things they do not love?

Shy. Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

Bass. Every offence is not a hate at first.

Shy. What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice?
Ant. I pray you, think you question with the Jew.
You may as well go stand upon the beach,
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;
You may as well use question with the wolf,
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;
You may as well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops, and to make no noise,
When they are fretten with the gusts of heaven;
You may as well do any thing most hard,
As seek to soften that—than which what's harder?—
His Jewish heart. Therefore, I do beseech you,
Make no more offers, use no farther means,
But with all brief and plain conveniency
Let me have judgment and the Jew his will.
Bass. For thy three thousand ducats here is six.
Shy. If every ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,
I would not draw them; I would have my bond.
Duke. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?
Shy. What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?
You have among you many a purchased slave,
Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts,
Because you bought them. Shall I say to you,
"Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?
Why sweat they under burthens? let their beds
Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates
Be seasoned with such viands"? You will answer,
"The slaves are ours." So do I answer you.

The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,
Is dearly bought; 'tis mine, and I will have it.
If you deny me, fie upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.
I stand for judgment! Answer; shall I have it?

Duke. Upon my power I may dismiss this court,
Unless Bellario, a learnéd doctor,
Whom I have sent for to determine this,
Come here to-day.

Saler. My lord, here stays without
A messenger with letters from the doctor,
New come from Padua.

Duke. Bring us the letters; call the messenger.

Bass. Good cheer, Antonio! What, man, courage yet!
The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

Ant. I am a tainted wether of the flock,
Meetest for death. The weakest kind of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground, and so let me.
You cannot better be employed, Bassanio,
Than to live still, and write mine epitaph.

Enter Nerissa, *dressed like a lawyer's clerk.*

Duke. Came you from Padua, from Bellario?

Ner. From both, my lord. Bellario greets your Grace.
[*Presenting a letter.*

Bass. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?

Shy. To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.

Gra. Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,

Thou mak'st thy knife keen; but no metal can,
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee?
Shy. No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.
Gra. O, be thou damned, inexecrable dog!
And for thy life let justice be accused.
Thou almost mak'st me waver in my faith,
To hold opinion with Pythagoras,
That souls of animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men. Thy currish spirit
Governed a wolf, who hanged for human slaughter,
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallowed dam,
Infused itself in thee; for thy desires
Are wolvish, bloody, starved and ravenous.
Shy. Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud.
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.
Duke. This letter from Bellario doth commend
A young and learnéd doctor to our court.
Where is he?
Ner. He attendeth here hard by,
To know your answer, whether you'll admit him.
Duke. With all my heart. Some three or four of you
Go give him courteous conduct to this place.
Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.
Clerk. [*Reads.*] Your Grace shall understand that at the receipt of your letter I am very sick; but in the instant that your messenger came, in

loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthasar. I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant. We turned o'er many books together. He is furnished with my opinion; which, bettered with his own learning, —the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend,—comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your Grace's request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation; for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his commendation.

Duke. You hear the learned Bellario, what he writes;
And here, I take it, is the doctor come.

Enter PORTIA *for* BALTHASAR.

Give me your hand. Came you from old Bellario?

Por. I did, my lord.

Duke. You are welcome; take your place.
Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the court?

Por. I am informéd throughly of the cause.
Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?

Duke. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

Por. Is your name Shylock?

Shy. Shylock is my name.

Por. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;
Yet in such rule that the Venetian law

Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.
You stand within his danger, do you not?
Ant. Ay, so he says.
Por. Do you confess the bond?
Ant. I do.
Por. Then must the Jew be merciful.
Shy. On what compulsion must I? tell me that.
Por. The quality of mercy is not strained.
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The thronéd monarch better than his crown.
His scepter shows the force of temporal power.
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptered sway;
It is enthronéd in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation. We do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.
Shy. My deeds upon my head! I crave the law,

The penalty and forfeit of my bond.
Por. Is he not able to discharge the money?
Bass. Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;
Yea, twice the sum. If that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart.
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority.
To do a great right, do a little wrong,
And curb this cruel devil of his will.
Por. It must not be; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree established.
'Twill be recorded for a precedent,
And many an error, by the same example,
Will rush into the state. It cannot be.
Shy. A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
O wise young judge, how I do honor thee!
Por. I pray you, let me look upon the bond.
Shy. Here 'tis, most reverend doctor, here it is.
Por. Shylock, there's thrice thy money offered thee.
Shy. An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven!
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice.
Por. Why, this bond is forfeit;
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful;
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.
Shy. When it is paid according to the tenor.

It doth appear you are a worthy judge;
You know the law, your exposition
Hath been most sound. I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgment. By my soul I swear
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me. I stay here on my bond.

Ant. Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgment.

Por. Why then, thus it is:
You must prepare your bosom for his knife.

Shy. O noble judge! O excellent young man!

Por. For the intent and purpose of the law
Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

Shy. 'Tis very true. O wise and upright judge!
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!

Por. Therefore lay bare your bosom.

Shy. Ay, his breast;
So says the bond; doth it not, noble judge?
"Nearest his heart;" those are the very words.

Por. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh
The flesh?

Shy. I have them ready.

Por. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

Shy. Is it so nominated in the bond?

Por. It is not so expressed; but what of that?
'Twere good you do so much for charity.

Shy. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.

Por. You, merchant, have you any thing to say?
Ant. But little; I am armed and well prepared.
Give me your hand, Bassanio; fare you well!
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom. It is still her use
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance
Of such a misery doth she cut me off.
Commend me to your honorable wife.
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;
Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death;
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
Repent but you that you shall lose your friend,
And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.
Bass. Antonio, I am married to a wife
Which is as dear to me as life itself;
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteemed above thy life.
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.
Por. Your wife would give you little thanks for that,
If she were by, to hear you make the offer.
Gra. I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love;
I would she were in heaven, so she could
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

Ner. 'Tis well you offer it behind her back;
The wish would make else an unquiet house.
Shy. These be the Christian husbands. I have a daughter;
Would any of the stock of Bárrabas
Had been her husband rather than a Christian!
[*Aside.*
We trifle time. I pray thee, púrsue sentence.
Por. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine.
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.
Shy. Most rightful judge!
Por. And you must cut this flesh from off his breast.
The law allows it, and the court awards it.
Shy. Most learnéd judge! A sentence. Come, prepare!
Por. Tarry a little; there is something else.
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
The words expressly are "a pound of flesh."
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the state of Venice.
Gra. O upright judge! Mark, Jew; O learnéd judge!
Shy. Is that the law?
Por. Thyself shalt see the act;
For, as thou urgest justice, be assured
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.
Gra. O learnéd judge! Mark, Jew; a learnéd judge!
Shy. I take this offer, then; pay the bond thrice,
And let the Christian go.
Bass. Here is the money.

Por. Soft!
The Jew shall have all justice; soft; no haste.
He shall have nothing but the penalty.
Gra. O Jew! an upright judge, a learnéd judge!
Por. Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.
Shed thou no blood; nor cut thou less nor more
But just a pound of flesh. If thou tak'st more
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance,
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou diest and all thy goods are confiscate.
Gra. A second Daniel! A Daniel, Jew!
Now, infidel, I have you on the hip.
Por. Why doth the Jew pause? Take thy forfeiture.
Shy. Give me my principal, and let me go.
Bass. I have it ready for thee; here it is.
Por. He hath refused it in the open court.
He shall have merely justice and his bond.
Gra. A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.
Shy. Shall I not have barely my principal?
Por. Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.
Shy. Why, then the devil give him good of it!
I'll stay no longer question.
Por. Tarry, Jew.
The law hath yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,

If it be proved against an alien
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the Duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st;
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly, and directly too,
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurred
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.
Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the Duke.

Gra. Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself.
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;
Therefore thou must be hanged at the state's charge.

Duke. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirits,
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it.
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;
The other half comes to the general state,
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

Por. Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.

Shy. Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that.
You take my house, when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house; you take my life,
When you do take the means whereby I live.

Por. What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

Gra. A halter gratis; nothing else, for God's sake.
Ant. So please my lord the Duke and all the court
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,
I am content; so he will let me have
The other half in use, to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter.
Two things provided more, that, for this favor,
He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift,
Here in the court, of all he dies possessed,
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.
Duke. He shall do this, or else I do recant
The pardon that I late pronouncéd here.
Por. Art thou contented, Jew? What dost thou say?
Shy. I am content.
Por. Clerk, draw a deed of gift.
Shy. I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;
I am not well. Send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.
Duke. Get thee gone, but do it.
Gra. In christening shalt thou have two godfathers.
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.
[*Exit Shylock.*
Duke. Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.
Por. I humbly do desire your Grace of pardon.
I must away this night toward Padua,
And it is meet I presently set forth.
Duke. I am sorry that your leisure serves you not.

Antonio, gratify this gentleman,
For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.
[*Exeunt Duke and his train.*

Bass. Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted
Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof,
Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,
We freely cope your courteous pains withal.

Ant. And stand indebted, over and above,
In love and service to you evermore.

Por. He is well paid that is well satisfied;
And I, delivering you, am satisfied,
And therein do account myself well paid.
My mind was never yet more mercenary.
I pray you, know me when we meet again.
I wish you well, and so I take my leave.

Bass. Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further.
Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,
Not as a fee. Grant me two things, I pray you,
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

Por. You press me far, and therefore I will yield.
[*To Ant.*] Give me your gloves, I'll wear them for your sake;
[*To Bass.*] And, for your love, I'll take this ring from you.
Do not draw back your hand; I'll take no more;
And you in love shall not deny me this.

Bass. This ring, good sir, alas, it is a trifle!
I will not shame myself to give you this.

Por. I will have nothing else but only this;

And now methinks I have a mind to it.

Bass. There's more depends on this than on the value.
The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,
And find it out by proclamation;
Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.

Por. I see, sir, you are liberal in offers.
You taught me first to beg; and now methinks
You teach me how a beggar should be answered.

Bass. Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife;
And when she put it on, she made me vow
That I should neither sell nor give nor lose it.

Por. That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.
An if your wife be not a mad-woman,
And know how well I have deserved the ring,
She would not hold out enemy for ever,
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!
[*Exeunt Portia and Nerissa.*

Ant. My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring.
Let his deservings and my love withal
Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment.

Bass. Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him;
Give him the ring; and bring him, if thou canst,
Unto Antonio's house. Away! make haste.
[*Exit Gratiano.*
Come, you and I will thither presently;
And in the morning early will we both
Fly toward Belmont. Come, Antonio. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II

The same. A street.

Enter Portia *and* Nerissa.

Por. Inquire the Jew's house out, give him this deed
And let him sign it. We'll away to-night,
And be a day before our husbands home.
This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

Enter Gratiano.

Gra. Fair sir, you are well o'erta'en.
My Lord Bassanio upon more advice
Hath sent you here this ring, and doth entreat
Your company at dinner.
Por. That cannot be.
His ring I do accept most thankfully,
And so, I pray you, tell him; furthermore,
I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.
Gra. That will I do.
Ner. Sir, I would speak with you.
[*Aside to Portia*] I'll see if I can get my husband's ring,
Which I did make him swear to keep for ever.
Por. [*Aside to Ner.*] Thou mayst, I warrant. We shall have old swearing

That they did give the rings away to men;
But we'll outface them, and outswear them too.
[*Aloud*] Away! make haste. Thou know'st where
I will tarry.

Ner. Come, good sir, will you show me to this house?
[*Exeunt.*

ACT FIFTH

Scene I

Belmont. Avenue to Portia's house.

Enter Lorenzo *and* Jessica.

Lor. The moon shines bright. In such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees
And they did make no noise, in such a night
Troilus methinks mounted the Troyan walls,
And sighed his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where Cressid lay that night.

Jes. In such a night
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew,
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself,
And ran dismayed away.

Lor. In such a night
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
Upon the wild sea banks, and waft her love
To come again to Carthage.

Jes. In such a night

Medea gathered the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æson.

Lor. In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew,
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice
As far as Belmont.

Jes. In such a night
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well,
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith
And ne'er a true one.

Lor. In such a night
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

Jes. I would out-night you, did no body come;
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man.

Enter Stephano.

Lor. Who comes so fast in silence of the night?

Steph. A friend.

Lor. A friend! what friend? Your name, I pray you, friend?

Steph. Stephano is my name; and I bring word
My mistress will before the break of day
Be here at Belmont. She doth stray about
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays
For happy wedlock hours.

Lor. Who comes with her?

Steph. None but a holy hermit and her maid.
I pray you, is my master yet returned?

Lor. He is not, nor we have not heard from him.
But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,
And ceremoniously let us prepare
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

Enter LAUNCELOT.

Laun. Sola, sola! wo ha, ho! sola, sola!
Lor. Who calls?
Laun. Sola! did you see Master Lorenzo? Master Lorenzo, sola, sola!
Lor. Leave hollaing, man; here.
Laun. Sola! where? where?
Lor. Here.
Laun. Tell him there's a post come from my master, with his horn full of good news. My master will be here ere morning. [*Exit.*
Lor. Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming.
And yet no matter; why should we go in?
My friend Stephano, signify, I pray you,
Within the house, your mistress is at hand;
And bring your music forth into the air.
[*Exit Stephano.*
How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears. Soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st

But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

Enter Musicians.

Come, ho, and wake Diana with a hymn!
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear,
And draw her home with music. [*Music.*

Jes. I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

Lor. The reason is, your spirits are attentive;
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,
Which is the hot condition of their blood;
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
Their savage eyes turned to a modest gaze
By the sweet power of music; therefore the poet
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones and floods;
Since nought so stockish, hard and full of rage,
But music for the time doth change his nature.
The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils.
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus.
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

Enter Portia *and* Nerissa.

Por. That light we see is burning in my hall.
How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.
Ner. When the moon shone, we did not see the candle.
Por. So doth the greater glory dim the less.
A substitute shines brightly as a king,
Until a king be by; and then his state
Empties itself, as doth an inland brook
Into the main of waters. Music! hark!
Ner. It is your music, madam, of the house.
Por. Nothing is good, I see, without respect;
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.
Ner. Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.
Por. The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark,
When neither is attended; and I think
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,
When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than the wren.
How many things by season seasoned are
To their right praise and true perfection!
Peace, ho! the moon sleeps with Endymion,
And would not be awaked. [*Music ceases.*
Lor. That is the voice,
Or I am much deceived, of Portia.
Por. He knows me as the blind man knows the cuckoo,
By the bad voice.
Lor. Dear lady, welcome home.
Por. We have been praying for our husbands' healths,

Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.
Are they returned?

Lor. Madam, they are not yet;
But there is come a messenger before,
To signify their coming.

Por. Go in, Nerissa;
Give order to my servants that they take
No note at all of our being absent hence;
Nor you, Lorenzo; Jessica, nor you.

[*A tucket sounds.*

Lor. Your husband is at hand; I hear his trumpet.
We are no tell-tales, madam; fear you not.

Por. This night methinks is but the daylight sick;
It looks a little paler. 'Tis a day,
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

Enter Bassanio, Antonio, Gratiano, *and their followers.*

Bass. We should hold day with the Antipodes,
If you would walk in absence of the sun.

Por. Let me give light, but let me not be light;
For a light wife doth make a heavy husband,
And never be Bassanio so for me.
But God sort all! You are welcome home, my lord.

Bass. I thank you, madam. Give welcome to my friend.
This is the man, this is Antonio,
To whom I am so infinitely bound.

Por. You should in all sense be much bound to him,
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.

Ant. No more than I am well acquitted of.
Por. Sir, you are very welcome to our house.
It must appear in other ways than words,
Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.
Gra. [*To Nerissa.*] By yonder moon I swear you do me wrong;
In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk.
Would he were dead that had it, for my part,
Since you do take it, love, so much at heart.
Por. A quarrel, ho, already! what's the matter?
Gra. About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring
That she did give me, whose posy was
For all the world like cutler's poetry
Upon a knife, "Love me, and leave me not."
Ner. What talk you of the posy or the value?
You swore to me, when I did give it you,
That you would wear it till your hour of death,
And that it should lie with you in your grave.
Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,
You should have been respective, and have kept it.
Gave it a judge's clerk! no, God's my judge,
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on 's face that had it.
Gra. He will, an if he live to be a man.
Ner. Ay, if a woman live to be a man.
Gra. Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,
A kind of boy, a little scrubbéd boy,
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk,
A prating boy, that begged it as a fee.
I could not for my heart deny it him.
Por. You were to blame, I must be plain with you,

To part so slightly with your wife's first gift;
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger
And so riveted with faith unto your flesh.
I gave my love a ring, and made him swear
Never to part with it; and here he stands.
I dare be sworn for him he would not leave it
Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth
That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano,
You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief.
An 'twere to me, I should be mad at it.

Bass. [*Aside*] Why, I were best to cut my left hand off,
And swear I lost the ring defending it.

Gra. My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away
Unto the judge that begged it, and indeed
Deserved it too; and then the boy, his clerk,
That took some pains in writing, he begged mine;
And neither man nor master would take aught
But the two rings.

Por. What ring gave you, my lord?
Not that, I hope, which you received of me.

Bass. If I could add a lie unto a fault,
I would deny it; but you see my finger
Hath not the ring upon it, it is gone.

Por. Even so void is your false heart of truth.
By heaven, I will ne'er come in your home
Until I see the ring.

Ner. Nor I in yours
Till I again see mine.

Bass. Sweet Portia,
If you did know to whom I gave the ring,

If you did know for whom I gave the ring,
And would conceive for what I gave the ring,
And how unwillingly I left the ring,
When nought would be accepted but the ring,
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

Por. If you had known the virtue of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
Or your own honor to contain the ring,
You would not then have parted with the ring.
What man is there so much unreasonable,
If you had pleased to have defended it
With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty
To urge the thing held as a ceremony?
Nerissa teaches me what to believe;
I'll die for 't but some woman had the ring.

Bass. No, by my honor, madam, by my soul,
No woman had it, but a civil doctor,
Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me,
And begged the ring; the which I did deny him,
And suffered him to go displeased away;
Even he that did uphold the very life
Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet lady?
I was enforced to send it after him;
I was beset with shame and courtesy;
My honor would not let ingratitude
So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady;
For, by these blessed candles of the night,
Had you been there, I think you would have begged
The ring of me to give the worthy doctor.

Por. Let not that doctor e'er come near my house.

Since he hath got the jewel that I loved,
And that which you did swear to keep for me,
I will become as liberal as you.
I'll not deny him any thing I have. . . .
Know him I shall, I am well sure of it.
Lie not a night from home; watch me like Argus.
If you do not, if I be left alone,
Now, by mine honor, which is yet mine own,
I'll have that doctor. . . .

Ner. And I his clerk; therefore be well advised
How you do leave me to mine own protection.

Gra. Well, do you so; let not me take him, then;
For if I do, I'll mar the young clerk's pen.

Ant. I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.

Por. Sir, grieve not you; you are welcome notwithstanding.

Bass. Portia, forgive me this enforcéd wrong;
And, in the hearing of these many friends,
I swear to thee, even by thine own fair eyes,
Wherein I see myself,—

Por. Mark you but that!
In both my eyes he doubly sees himself;
In each eye, one. Swear by your double self,
And there's an oath of credit.

Bass. Nay, but hear me.
Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear
I never more will break an oath with thee.

Ant. I once did lend my body for his wealth;
Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,
Had quite miscarried. I dare be bound again,

My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord
Will never more break faith advisedly.

Por. Then you shall be his surety. Give him this,
And bid him keep it better than the other.

Ant. Here, Lord Bassanio; swear to keep this ring.

Bass. By heaven, it is the same I gave the doctor!

Por. I had it of him. Pardon me, Bassanio;
For, by this ring, the doctor supped with me.

Ner. And pardon me, my gentle Gratiano;
For that same scrubbéd boy, the doctor's clerk,
In lieu of this last night did sup with me.

Gra. Why, this is like the mending of highways
In summer, where the ways are fair enough.
What, are we cheated ere we have deserved it?

Por. Speak not so grossly. You are all amazed.
Here is a letter; read it at your leisure;
It comes from Padua, from Bellario.
There you shall find that Portia was the doctor,
Nerissa there her clerk. Lorenzo here
Shall witness I set forth as soon as you,
And even but now returned; I have not yet
Entered my house. Antonio, you are welcome;
And I have better news in store for you
Than you expect. Unseal this letter soon;
There you shall find three of your argosies
Are richly come to harbor suddenly.
You shall not know by what strange accident
I chancéd on this letter.

Ant. I am dumb.

Bass. Were you the doctor and I knew you not?

Gra. Were you the clerk that is to make me cheated?
Ner. Ay, but the clerk that never means to do it,
Unless he live until he be a man. . . .
Ant. Sweet lady, you have given me life and living;
For here I read for certain that my ships
Are safely come to road.
Por. How now, Lorenzo!
My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.
Ner. Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.
There do I give to you and Jessica,
From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,
After his death, of all he dies possessed of.
Lor. Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way
Of starvéd people.
Por. It is almost morning,
And yet I am sure you are not satisfied
Of these events at full. Let us go in;
And charge us there upon inter'gatories,
And we will answer all things faithfully.
Gra. Let it be so. The first inter'gatory
That my Nerissa shall be sworn on is,
Whether till the next night she had rather stay,
Or go from hence now, being two hours to day.
But were the day come, I should wish it dark,
That I were whispering with the doctor's clerk.
Well, while I live I'll fear no other thing
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring. [*Exeunt.*

NOTES AND COMMENT

Act I. Scene I.

Antonio's melancholy, lines 1-112

The reader beginning a new play is like a stranger entering a new social world. He knows neither the dispositions nor the circumstances of the people around him; and he must learn these facts at once if he is to watch with sympathy and interest the fortunes of his new acquaintances. Consequently in any play the conversation of the opening scene must enable us to understand the surroundings to which we are introduced. It must show us the characters of the different people, their attitude toward each other, their present circumstances, and future plans.

At the same time, the author must make this conversation seem natural. We must never feel that the speakers are conscious of our presence and are stating facts merely to give us information, however much this may really be the case. Instead we must feel that the people before us are busy with their own affairs; and that we, like quick-witted observers, are piecing together facts from chance remarks, as we should in real life among a crowd of new acquaintances. So true is Shakespeare to life that he makes us imagine we are discovering all necessary details by our own watchfulness and ingenuity; yet so skilfully has he arranged the scene that at the end we have learned everything which we needed to know.

The contrast between Antonio's sadness and the cheerfulness of his friends serves a double purpose. In the first place, by a scene of mingled foreboding and jollity it develops in the reader the proper mood of mind for the following play, since the play itself is a mixture of sadness and merriment. The keynote is struck at the beginning. Then, too, since Antonio's friends attribute his mood to anxiety, they naturally mention his ships at sea; and thus Shakespeare can make Salanio and Salarino converse like real men, and yet make them tell us just what we need to know.

4. **Stuff:** almost any kind of material. This word originally conveyed a more dignified idea than it does now.

5. **I am to learn:** I am yet to learn. Elizabethans often omitted *yet* and similar words where modern English uses them.

11. **Pageants.** Strictly speaking, pageants were two-story movable stages on wheels, on which popular plays were given before Shakespeare's time in the open street. Here the poet is comparing the lofty ships to these high, picturesque structures. To-day the word *pageant* more often means a show or spectacle than the stage on which it is acted.

13. **Curt'sy.** The big ship causes such a swell in passing that the little boats rock up and down and seem to nod or "curt'sy" to her.

14. Notice that three words in this line, *with, woven, wings,* begin with *w.* When two or more words in a line begin with the sound of the same letter, this repeating of initials is called alliteration. It frequently gives an added beauty to the sound of the verse.

15. **Such venture forth:** so much money risked or adventured in ships.

18. **Plucking the grass:** to toss it in the air and see which way the wind blew, whether it endangered his ships or not.

27. **Andrew:** the name of the ship.

35. **Worth this.** Here the actor would finish the thought with a gesture.

43. Compare this line with line 177.

50. **Janus:** a Roman god. He was the patron deity of gates, and was represented with two faces because a gate looks both outward and inward. Salarino is discussing two types of men, those with cheerful faces and those with gloomy ones; and for this reason he swears by a two-headed god.

53. The bagpipe is a musical wind instrument consisting of a large leather bag connected with a set of sounding pipes.

56. **Nestor:** the oldest and consequently the gravest of the Greek leaders against Troy. Even he would laugh more easily than these "vinegar aspects."

67. **You grow exceeding strange. Must it be so?** You are growing to be quite a stranger. Must you leave us now? Salarino and Salanio have already started to go.

74. **Respect upon the world:** regard for the world's opinion. *It* in the next line refers to the world's opinion.

78. **A stage.** Shakespeare repeatedly compares the shortness of human life to the part of a poor player,

> "That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
> And then is heard no more."

Here Gratiano answers, "Well, if the world is only a play, let me have the part of the jolly jester. If my health must break down, I'll break it down with merry revels, not with groaning despondency."

82. **Mortifying:** deadly. It comes from mortification in the sense of decay, not mortification in the sense of shame.

84. **Like his grandsire cut in alabaster:** an allusion to the statues of the dead placed over their tombs in ancient cathedrals.

89. **Do cream and mantle like a standing pond:** are like a stagnant pond where the scum forms thick as cream on milk and mantles, or covers over, the whole surface.

90. **And do a wilful stillness entertain:** maintain an obstinate silence.

91. **Opinion.** This word here means the world's opinion about a man; that is, his reputation. The person in question wishes to use his reputation for learning like a cloak to cover his weaknesses.

92. **Conceit:** intelligence, the power to conceive or take in ideas. The word practically never has its modern meaning in Shakespeare.

93. **As who should say:** as if one should say.

96. **Therefore.** *Therefore* commonly refers back to a reason already given. Here it refers forward to the reason in the next line, "For saying nothing."

98-99. **If they should speak, would almost damn those ears.** Understand *they* before *would* as its subject. In the next line *them* and *brothers* both refer to the affected pretenders to wisdom; *their* refers to the hearers. *Matthew* v, 22 reads: "Whosoever shall say [to his brother] . . . 'Thou fool', shall be in danger of hell fire." But these affected men would talk such folly that

they would exasperate others into calling them fools, and so would cause the eternal perdition of these unfortunates.

101-102. Don't use this melancholy air as bait to catch a false reputation for wisdom; for that kind of reputation is something which any simpleton can get. A gudgeon is a stupid fish and very easily caught.

106. **One of these same dumb wise men:** one of those whom Gratiano has just been ridiculing.

110. **For this gear:** for the present occasion.

BASSANIO SEEKS ANTONIO'S HELP, lines 113-185

115. **In all Venice.** In most of Shakespeare's plays some character during the first scene mentions the name of the place, lest the audience should forget their whereabouts. Venice at the time represented in the play was one of the most powerful and splendid cities in Europe. It governed itself as an independent state, held numerous colonies on the mainland, and controlled the commerce of the Mediterranean. So great was its trade that at one time it had three hundred large ships and three thousand small ones. Its merchants were rich and powerful as princes, and sent their vessels over all the known world. Antonio belongs to this class. He is no ordinary tradesman but a merchant prince, who has five or six argosies on the sea at once.

120. **Swore a secret pilgrimage.** Pilgrimages to the shrines of saints were common then. Antonio smilingly speaks of Portia as Bassanio's patron saint.

125. **Continuance:** continuation of.

126. **Make moan to be abridged:** make moan because I am deprived of.

129. **My time:** my extravagant youth.

137. **Within the eye of honor:** if it is of such a nature that it can bear inspection by the eye of honor. Shakespeare is careful to remind us that Bassanio is no mere fortune-hunter, but a man with high ideals of honor.

139. **To your occasions:** to your needs.

141. **Of the selfsame flight:** a second arrow made so much like the first that it would fly about the same distance, and so

fall near the first one to "find the other forth," that is, find it out. Notice that line 143 has six feet instead of five.

145. **Pure innocence:** mere childish folly.

154. **With circumstance:** with circumstantial details, or circumlocution.

156. **In making question of my uttermost:** in questioning my willingness to help you to my utmost ability.

160. **Prest unto it:** ready and eager for it.

165-166. Brutus was a patriotic Roman who through misdirected zeal stabbed Julius Cæsar. His wife Portia and her father Cato were famous for their stern nobility of character. Both took their own lives rather than submit to tyranny.

170-172. The allusion is to the voyage of the Argonauts, a legendary tale of ancient Greece. According to this story, Pelias had usurped the throne of one of the Greek states. Wishing to rid himself of Jason, the rightful heir, Pelias sent that young prince on an apparently hopeless errand to bring back the golden fleece from Colchis. This fleece was that of a wonderful ram. It was jealously guarded by Æëtes, the Colchian king, and watched over by a fire-breathing dragon. With a band of brave companions Jason sailed in the ship *Argo*, and after many adventures came to Colchis. Here King Æëtes' daughter Medea, a beautiful enchantress, fell in love with him, and by her skill enabled him to overcome all obstacles, until he won the fleece. Then Jason and Medea fled secretly from King Æëtes, and were married. Some accounts say that later Jason was ungrateful to his wife, and that Medea's last days were full of unhappiness.

175. **Such thrift:** such success.

185. **Of my trust, or for my sake:** because of their confidence in my financial credit, or else for the sake of my friendship.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

What reason has Antonio for mentioning Portia to Bassanio? (See line 121.) What considerations help to justify Bassanio in his attempt to marry a rich heiress? What do we learn about the past relations of Antonio and Bassanio? What additional

light does this knowledge throw on the character of both men? Are they related by blood? (See line 57.) Has Bassanio as a lover received any encouragement from Portia? Who is the gravest of these men in this scene? Who the merriest? Who the greatest talker?

Act I. Scene II.

PORTIA'S REMARKS ON HER SUITORS

The scene shifts here from Venice to Portia's country mansion. But the story of the last scene continues in the present one. The heiress to whom we are now introduced is she whose name we have already heard; Bassanio, as we know, is coming here soon; and in the neighboring city Antonio is trying "what his credit can in Venice do" to bring these young people together. The confidential chat between Portia and Nerissa offers an admirable method of imparting information to the reader, a method as charming as it is thorough. At the end of the scene we know fully the conditions governing Portia's choice of a husband, and her experience with different suitors. We learn also that Bassanio had made some impression on her heart in days past, when he had visited her father with the Marquis of Montferrat; and that it would be a perfectly natural and womanly thing if she should fall in love with him now.

8. **No mean happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean:** no small happiness to be in a position of moderate wealth, enjoying "the golden mean." Shakespeare plays on the two interpretations of *mean*. He does the same in line 27 with the two *wills*, and in lines 71 and 73 with the two uses of *say*. Puns were used and admired by the Elizabethans much more than by us.

11. **Sentences:** maxims. The word *sentence* came originally from the Latin *sententia* and here keeps the old Latin meaning. In many cases where the Shakespearean meaning of a word differs from the modern meaning the Shakespearean one is that of a Latin word from which our English word came.

28. **Nor refuse none.** Double negatives were good grammar in Shakespeare's time.

41. **Level at my affection.** To *level* literally means to *take aim.* Aim your eye at my affections and discover what they are.

44. **Colt:** a young, foolish fellow. Used of so ardent a horseman, the word has the force of a pun.

51. **If you will not have me, choose:** that is, choose a better if you can.

53. **The weeping philosopher:** an allusion to Heraclitus, a Greek philosopher, who after political disappointment retired to the country and spent the remainder of his life in study and ill-humor. Portia fears that the count may have a similar old age.

58. **By the French lord:** in regard to the French lord.

79-82. **How oddly he is suited:** how oddly he dresses. The doublet was a close fitting jacket; round hose were large trousers frequently stuffed to make them stand out; a bonnet was a man's hat.

85-89. The Scotch lord is so cowardly that when cuffed by the Englishman he dares not hit back, but sullenly promises to repay the blow in future. Portia turns this into a jest by saying that he borrowed the blow as one would borrow money, and promised to repay it later. A man who borrowed money gave a bond signed by himself and by a second person who became his "surety", that is, promised to repay the debt if the borrower could not. The borrower was said to "seal to" the bond and the surety to "seal under." In the present quarrel the Frenchman took the Scotch lord's part; hence Portia says that the Frenchman became surety for his friend and sealed under for another [blow]. Shakespeare's audience would take this passage as a local hit at the promises of assistance which France was continually giving Scotland in the struggle with England.

113-117. **Some other sort:** some other way than that which your father imposed. Portia immediately answers, If I should live to be as old as the Cumæan Sibyl (who obtained a promise from Apollo that she should live as many years as she held grains of sand in her fingers) I would still remain unmarried like the virgin goddess Diana, unless won by my father's method.

135. **The four strangers.** Six have been mentioned: the Neapolitan, the County Palatine, the French lord, the English lord, the Scottish lord, and the German. Little changes were frequently made in Shakespeare's plays, as in most plays acted in theaters; and sometimes the author in changing one part forgot to change another to correspond. Here there were probably four suitors at first, and when Shakespeare added the other two he forgot to change the *four* to a *six*.

143. **Condition:** temper, disposition.

144. **Shrive me:** hear my confession. A man with fine character but hideous face would suit me as a father confessor, but not as a husband. Portia makes an unconscious rime in *shrive me* and *wive me*, and is immediately inspired to give an intentional rime, which ends the scene.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

What tedious company has made Portio say that she is weary of the world? Is her statement taken very seriously by Nerissa? What speech of Nerissa's connects this scene with the last one? What announcement connects it with future scenes? What are we told about the caskets? How does Shakespeare make it seem natural that these facts should be mentioned?

Act I. Scene III.

THE INTRODUCTION OF SHYLOCK, lines 1-105

During the first part of this scene, lines 1-105, Shylock is pondering what he shall do, whether he shall drive an ordinary bargain for the sake of profit or make Bassanio's offer a means of revenge on Antonio. He is so deep in thought, apparently, that he forgets the time required for the bond, although Bassanio has just told it to him. In the second part of the scene, lines 106-182, the Jew has formed his resolution, and makes his eventful bargain with Antonio for the pound of flesh. With this

bargain the main action of the story begins. Bassanio now has money with which to go a-wooing, and immediately sets out for Portia's home; and Antonio, although he does not realize it, has placed his life at the mercy of his worst enemy, if his ships do not come home within three months.

"Shylock enters with slow, shuffling gait; restless, half-closed eyes, and the fingers of his disengaged hand (one holds a staff) ever moving, as if from the constant habit of feeling and caressing the ducats that are passing through them."—*Booth.*

1. **Three thousand ducats.** A ducat was worth about as much as an American dollar; but since money went fully eight times as far in Shakespeare's time as now, the sum meant as much as twenty or thirty thousand dollars would to us.

3. **Well.** The terseness of Shylock's answers is at once businesslike and ominous.

7. **May you stead me?** Are you willing to aid me?

12. **A good man:** that is, he is what insurance men would call "a good risk." But Bassanio, disinclined to any familiarity with a Jew, purposely misunderstands Shylock's "good."

17-26. **In supposition:** supposed to be coming, but not yet here, and exposed to loss on the way. It must be remembered that the small, badly constructed craft of that day were much more liable to shipwreck than modern vessels; and that the Mediterranean sea was infested with pirates.

20. **Rialto.** This word sometimes referred to an island, sometimes to a bridge leading to that island, and sometimes to a building on the island. The Rialto shown in pictures is usually the bridge. The Rialto which Shylock means is the building. This building was a lofty one with numerous porticoes. It was the common resort of merchants, and corresponded in many ways to our modern Stock Exchange.

22. **Squandered:** not wasted, but scattered or sent out in different directions. Shylock, like a good financier, knows all that is happening in the commercial world.

33. **If it please you to dine with us.** Bassanio is obviously very anxious to get the loan; else he would not ask a Jew to dine at his home. Shylock evidently does not consider the invitation due to love, as is shown by his answer. Line 35 alludes to the incident in the eighth chapter of *Matthew,* where the devils

who have been cast out of the insane men by Christ take refuge in a herd of swine.

42. Fawning publican. The publicans were the officials who collected taxes in Palestine under the Roman government. They made themselves so hated by their greed and dishonesty that the word *publican* became a term of savage contempt among the Jews.

44-52. In Shakespeare's time there was a strong prejudice against men who received interest on any loan. To-day the word *usury* is applied only to an unreasonably high rate of interest; at that time *usury, usance,* and *interest* were all used alike for any money received beyond the principal of the loan; and all of these words implied something contemptible or wrong. One of the strongest objections against interest—although one which seems rather absurd to us to-day,—was that it is unnatural that money, a dead metal, should produce more money, as animals multiply or as grain sown in the ground produces more grain. Shylock refers to this idea in line 97, and Antonio in line 135. Antonio, however, probably had better reasons than this for objecting to Shylock's "usances", for the common rate of interest charged by the Jews in Venice was fifteen per cent, nearly three times the modern legal rate.

47. Upon the hip: a metaphor borrowed from wrestling. To catch another wrestler upon the hip was to catch him at a disadvantage.

58. Tubal . . . Will furnish me. This pretext of recourse to a friend is an old trick among money-lenders. Notice whether or not there is any evidence later in the play that Shylock really borrowed from Tubal.

63. Giving of excess. He takes nothing in excess of what he lent; that is, he takes back his principal but no interest.

65. Is he yet possessed. To be possessed of something in Shakespeare regularly means to be informed about it.

74. As his wise mother wrought. Jacob's mother disguised him as his older brother Esau. In this disguise he imposed on his blind father Isaac, and was chosen head of the family, a position which justly belonged to Esau. Jacob thus became "the third possessor", the two before him being his father

Isaac and his grandfather Abraham. The story is given in *Genesis* xxvii.

79. Were compromised: had made an agreement. The account of Jacob's bargain with Laban is found in *Genesis* xxx.

86. Peeled me certain wands. *Me* here corresponds to the Ethical Dative in Latin. It has no direct connection with the rest of the sentence, but simply shows the speaker's interest in the whole statement. Modern English would omit it.

92ff. Shylock has been trying to prove that "business is business" by citing an example of sharp practice from the life of a Biblical hero. Antonio answers that there is no connection between this case and the usury of Shylock; and that the passage mentioned was not inserted in the Bible to justify the use of interest. In his next speech Antonio defeats Shylock at the latter's own weapons by alluding to another passage in the Bible, *Matthew* iv, 6, where the devil cites Scripture for his purpose, just as Shylock has been doing.

THE BARGAIN FOR THE POUND OF FLESH, lines 106-182

118. Void your rheum: eject your spittle.

124-125. Notice the alliteration and the threatening effect which it gives to the sound of Shylock's words:

> "Shall I *b*end low and in a *b*ondsman's key,
> With *b*ated *b*reath."

131-138. One of the most wonderful features in this play is the skill with which Shakespeare makes Antonio and Shylock seem unjust and repulsive to each other, and yet makes both of them hold the reader's sympathy. Antonio sees in Shylock nothing but a heartless usurer; hence the merchant, though kind and lovable toward every one else, is proud and disdainful toward the Jew. Shylock sees nothing in Antonio but the arrogant aristocrat who despises his race and asks for money not as speaking to a friend but as to an enemy. Perhaps our hearts warm more toward Antonio; but we cannot help feeling in Shylock the

pathos of a persecuted race; cannot help feeling that if we had such a lifetime full of insults and wrongs behind us, we should do as he did. And we must remember that it is Antonio, not Shylock, who in line 136 makes a practical declaration of war between them, and in line 138 tells Shylock to show no mercy if the bond should be forfeited.

135. See above, note to line 44.

137. **Who, if he break.** Modern English would be, So that if he break.

138. **Why, look you, how you storm!** Shylock's is one of those natures which can appear most smooth and courteous when at heart most angry.

150. **An equal pound:** a just pound, exact weight.

163. **Dealings teaches.** The verb here is not in the singular, but represents an old form of the plural ending in *s,* which was good grammar in Shakespeare's day but has dropped out of use since. In the same line modern English would insert *to* before *suspect.*

165. **If he should break his day:** if he should fail to pay on or before the day appointed, and so forfeit his bond.

168. To-day we should say, Of sheep, cattle, or goats.

180. **I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.** Here Shakespeare gives us a warning note as to what we are to expect from Shylock in future. Two lines below we are reminded by the mention of Antonio's ships that his fate depends on them; and so are prepared to expect misfortune when later we learn that they are wrecked.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

What just and what unjust causes for his hatred of Antonio does Shylock mention? Why is Bassanio so much more suspicious of the Jew's proposal than Antonio? How do Antonio and Shylock silence his objections? Do they wholly remove his suspicions? How would you have acted in Bassanio's place? In the beginning of this scene is Shylock's chief anxiety about revenge or about the safety of a loan made to Antonio? What changes him during the scene?

Act II. Scene I.

ARRIVAL OF THE PRINCE OF MOROCCO

Before Bassanio arrives, we watch the fortunes of two other suitors, who are unsuccessful. From their fate we learn that the lottery of the three caskets is not a mere matter of chance, but a skilfully devised test of the suitor's character. For this reason when Bassanio finally chooses the correct one, we feel that he has to some extent deserved his success.

Flourish: a strain of triumphant music.

5. **Phoebus'**: Phoebus Apollo was the Grecian sun god. He was also the god of poetry and music.

7. **To prove whose blood is reddest.** Modern English would require *redder* in the case of only two people. Red blood was considered a proof of courage. Elizabethan gallants sometimes gashed their arms and drank the blood to their ladies' health. Morocco's proposal is in harmony with his warlike character but hardly calculated to please so refined a lady as Portia.

9. **Feared**: frightened.

13. **In terms of choice**: in my method of choice.

18. **By his wit.** *Wit* had a much broader meaning in Shakespeare's time than now. Here it means *wisdom*.

20. **Yourself, renownéd prince, then stood as fair**: I should admire you as much as any of my suitors. The prince takes this as a compliment, and Portia intends that he shall; but she does not really mean it as one, for by these words she puts him in the same class as those other suitors on whose very absence she doted.

25. **The Sophy**: the emperor of Persia. Morocco has been aiding the Turks under Sultan Solyman in their wars with the Persians. Solyman the Magnificent was one of the greatest rulers of his time, and a bitter foe to Venice. The prince is tactlessly boasting to Portia of the aid which he has given to her country's enemy.

32. **Hercules and Lichas.** Hercules was the strongest of

the legendary Grecian heroes. He killed the great Nemean lion and the many-headed Hydra, and performed numerous similar feats beyond the power of all other men; but, strong as he was, he had no better chance at dice than his servant Lichas. Is Morocco modest or boastful in making this comparison?

35. **Alcides:** the family name of Hercules.

44. **First forward to the temple:** perhaps to ask Heaven's assistance in the coming choice of the caskets.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

Does Morocco speak chiefly about himself or about Portia? Is he trying to give her pleasure by his conversation, or attempting to impress her with the magnitude of his own exploits? How does this show that he would make an undesirable husband? What promise does Morocco make in this scene? Why had Portia's father required this promise?

Act II. Scene II.

LAUNCELET JESTS WITH HIS FATHER, lines 1-120

Shakespeare delights in showing us different types of humanity in the same play. Here we have a half-stupid, half-clever servant introduced between the groups of stately ladies and gentlemen. If we would know why Shakespeare does this, we must ask ourselves why we enjoy an elaborate reception one day and a chat with an amusing beggar the next. What we enjoy in real life we can enjoy in Shakespeare, for his plays are a mirror of life. It must be noticed that Shakespeare makes every scene, even this, add something to the story of the main characters. What do we learn from Launcelot about the dispositions of Shylock and Bassanio?

9. **Scorn running with thy heels:** show your contempt for the idea of running by kicking up your heels at it.

11. **Via!** a cry used to encourage a horse or a boat's crew. Launcelot seems to regard the fiend as a friendly coach helping him to keep his courage up.

18. My father did something smack: that is, he smacked of a rascal. *Grow to* implies the same idea. It is said to be a figure of speech from burnt milk which sticks to the pan and has a bad taste. How does this speech prepare us for Launcelot's attitude toward his father later in the scene?

29. Incarnal. He means *incarnate.* Launcelot frequently uses big words incorrectly. In line 39 he says he will try *confusions* with his father when he means *conclusions.* The amusing thing here is that he unintentionally tells the truth.

38. Sand-blind: half blind, purblind. *High-gravel blind* is Launcelot's own invention, and is intentional nonsense. Launcelot's directions, lines 42-46, would be confusing enough for any one; the practical joke becomes doubly wicked when applied to a half-blind man. No wonder old Gobbo exclaims, "By God's sonties [by God's little saints] 'twill be a hard way to hit!"

45. Marry: a common exclamation, originally derived from Mary, the name of the Virgin.

49. Whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no? How would an answer like "No, he doesn't" make Gobbo's stupid sentence half a question and half a lie?

51. Talk you of young Master Launcelot? *Master* was a term of respect applied to gentlemen, never to servants.

56. Well to live: with good prospects of a long life.

59. Your worship's friend, and Launcelot, sir. He may be your friend, but he's plain Launcelot, not "master."

63-68. Ergo: a Latin word meaning *therefore,* and generally used in very accurate logical reasoning. In the purposely confused sentences of Launcelot it is magnificently out of place.

Fates. . . . Destinies. . . . Sisters Three: different names with the same meaning. The three Fates in Grecian mythology were three sister goddesses who controlled the destinies of men. In pictures they are represented as holding the thread of human life. Clotho spins it; Lachesis determines its length; and Atropos cuts it off with the shears of death.

64. Father: often used as a term of respect for old men in general. Gobbo has not recognized his son yet.

71. Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post? On what word in Gobbo's last speech is Launcelot punning? A hovel-post was the post of a shed.

99. What a beard hast thou got. The mischievous Launcelot has kneeled with his back to his father, so that the half blind old man mistakes his long hair for a beard. Launcelot really has a smooth chin, hence the point of his remark about Dobbin's tail.

110. Have set up my rest: have resolved. The expression was derived from card playing, and meant literally to stand by the cards in one's hand. Notice the pun on the two meanings of *rest.*

115. Give me your present to one Master Bassanio. *Me* is the Ethical Dative, as in Act I, Scene iii, line 86.

LAUNCELOT ENTERS BASSANIO'S SERVICE, lines 121-215

122. By five of the clock. At what hour are these events occurring? See Scene iv, line 8.

128. Gramercy: (French *grand merci*), many thanks.

132. Infection. Launcelot means *affection.* In the same way he uses *fruitfy* for *notify* in line 141, and *impertinent* for *pertinent* in line 145.

138. Are scarce cater-cousins: are not on friendly terms.

150. Serve you, sir. Notice how many lines the two Gobbos have wasted in trying to say what Launcelot here says in three words.

157. The old proverb. This ran, "The grace of God is gear (wealth) enough." Shylock has gear enough, but Bassanio has all the grace of God.

163. Guarded: ornamented with braid.

166. Well, if any man in Italy have a fairer table. *Table* in Shakespeare frequently means a memorandum or tablet. Here Launcelot is studying the lines of his palm by the art of palmistry, and finds his future written there as if on a tablet. "I never saw a better hand than this, which solemnly declares that I shall have good fortune." The rest of the passage shows what he considers good fortune. That is certainly a strange arithmetic by which he makes eleven widows and nine maids count as fifteen wives.

176. For this gear: for this business.

178. Notice that Launcelot talks in prose, but the more dignified characters in blank verse.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

How far is Launcelot correct in his judgment of Bassanio and Shylock? How far does the story advance in this scene? How does Shakespeare make it seem perfectly natural that the audience should learn Gratiano's faults from Bassanio? Is Bassanio anxious about Gratiano's behavior at Belmont for Gratiano's sake or for his own, or for both? What influence might Gratiano's blunt ways have on Bassanio's ability to repay Antonio?

Act II. Scene III.

SHYLOCK'S HOME AND DAUGHTER

2. **Our house is hell.** Jessica is very much agitated, and says far more than she means. She is now forced to choose between her Christian lover and the religion that her mother taught her. The responsibility of making such a choice would embitter any home for her. Do we in this act ever see Shylock harsh to his daughter?

10. **Tears exhibit my tongue:** tears show what I would say if I could speak.

11. **Most sweet Jew.** Is Launcelot's admiration for Jessica due wholly to her virtues or partly to the ducat which she has just given him?

14. **My manly spirit:** said in fun, for Launcelot knows that he is no hero.

20. **I shall end this strife:** the strife between my home ties and my love for Lorenzo.

Act II. Scene IV.

LORENZO RECEIVES JESSICA'S LETTER

1. **In supper-time:** during supper-time. What banquet is Gratiano giving up for the sake of his friend? (See end of Scene ii.)

5. Have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers: have not provided ourselves yet with torch-bearers. Lorenzo and his friends are going masquerading. Venice was a city of masques and masquerades at all times of the year.

10. Break up this: open this letter.

20. Take this: take this reward for your trouble. Has Launcelot been paid once already for this letter?

24. Provided of a torch-bearer: provided with one.

37-38. Unless she do it under this excuse,
That she is issue to a faithless Jew.

The first *she* refers to Misfortune, the second to Jessica. The term *faithless Jew* does not mean treacherous Jew, but an unbeliever, a man not of the Christian faith.

39. Peruse this as thou goest. How does this act show the close friendship between Lorenzo and Gratiano?

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

Did Jessica or Lorenzo plan the elopement? Has Jessica made any preparation for it? How have the previous scenes helped us to understand the conduct of Lorenzo and Jessica? What evidence is there that Lorenzo had received letters from Jessica before this?

Act II. Scene V.

JESSICA AND HER FATHER

Here we have a picture of Shylock's attitude toward his daughter. Is it harsh? Is it loving? Is it indifferent?

3. Thou shalt not gormandize. Shylock's idea of the amount of food required differs from Launcelot's. (See what the latter says, Act II, Scene ii, line 113.)

14. To feed upon The prodigal Christian. How has Shylock changed his mind? (See Act I, Scene iii, line 38.) Why has he changed?

18. For I did dream of money-bags to-night: a pleasant dream, and dreams go by contraries. *To-night* in Shakespeare's time meant either this coming night or last night. Which must it mean here? Which below in line 37?

20. **Your reproach.** Notice how Shylock puns on Launcelot's mistake.

25. **My nose fell a-bleeding on Black Monday.** Nose-bleed was often considered as an evil omen. Black Monday was the Monday after Easter, so called in memory of a former Easter Monday, when many of King Edward's soldiers perished in a violent snow-storm at the siege of Paris. Ash-Wednesday is the Wednesday after Easter. It must have been a peculiar date when Black Monday fell on Ash-Wednesday, when it was the last Easter Monday and yet four years ago, and when it was six in the morning and yet in the afternoon. Launcelot is talking intentional nonsense.

30. **Wry-necked fife:** either a crooked fife or a wry-necked player on a fife.

33. **Varnished faces:** varnished with cosmetics, which were widely used by the gay revelers in Venice. Or perhaps the allusion is to their varnished masques.

36. **By Jacob's staff I swear.** Jacob, the founder of the Jewish race, has already been alluded to in Act I. The staff of the ancient Hebrews was their constant companion, a support, a weapon, and a means of keeping their flocks together. Jacob's use of his staff is alluded to in *Genesis* xxxii, 10, and *Hebrews* xi, 21. Shylock like most Jews, enjoys referring to his nation's famous past. He does it again in mentioning Hagar, line 44. Hagar was bondwoman to Sarah, grandmother of Jacob. Her story is told in *Genesis* xvi. As she was a servant, *Hagar's offspring* would be a term of contempt.

47. **Sleeps by day More than the wildcat:** who has been hunting all night.

52. **Perhaps I will return immediately.** This sounds like a threat to Jessica.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

What is Shylock's motive in going to Antonio's supper? What falsehood does Jessica tell and what excuse has she? Why has Shylock parted with Launcelot to Bassanio? What remarks of Shylock's show suspicion of Jessica? How would this affect her?

Act II. Scene VI.

ELOPEMENT OF JESSICA AND LORENZO

5. Venus' pigeons. Venus, the Roman goddess of love, is represented as flying in her chariot drawn by doves to seal lovers' new made bonds. Salarino implies that the fickle goddess makes more haste to seal new bonds of love than to keep those already made (*obligéd faith*) from being broken.

10. Untread again: retrace in the opposite direction.

17. How like the prodigal doth she return. An allusion to the Biblical story of the Prodigal Son, *Luke* xv, 11-32.

21. My long abode: my long delay.

30. Who love I so much. The use of *who* for *whom* was once correct grammar.

35. Ashamed of my exchange: that is, of her exchange of a girl's clothes for a boy's.

38. Cupid: the Roman boy-god of love.

42. Too too light: a play on words. *Light* in Shakespeare often means *frivolous*.

47. The close night doth play the runaway: the secret night is passing fast.

51. By my hood. Gratiano swears by his masquer's costume. The Jews called all races outside of their own Gentiles.

65. Bassanio presently will go aboard. Notice how careful Shakespeare is to make us feel that this is all one story, although it contains so many different people. We have been following the fortunes of Lorenzo and Jessica; but in the midst of their elopement we are reminded that Bassanio sails to Belmont to-night to woo Portia.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

What connection has Gratiano's long speech with Lorenzo's intended elopement? What is the character of Jessica as shown here? Is she modest? Does she take the money and jewels through greed or through desire to help her lover? Would this

wealth naturally come to her at her father's death? How far can we excuse the theft? What dramatic purpose is served by the entrance and speeches of Antonio? How would the events of this scene naturally inflame Shylock's hatred toward Christians?

Act II. Scene VII.

THE CHOICE OF THE GOLDEN CASKET

Morocco is a man of many noble traits, but one who judges too much by outward appearance. He thinks of Portia, not as a warm-hearted woman, but as a glorious prize which is sought by all men, and which he is to win amid the admiration and envy of his unfortunate rivals. Such a man naturally chooses the golden casket, as Portia's father had foreseen.

4. **Who.** To-day we should use *which* of inanimate things.

40. **Shrine:** as if Portia were a saint, and pilgrims were journeying to kiss the shrine built to her.

41. **Hyrcanian deserts.** Hyrcania was a wide, barren region south of the Caspian sea. It was famous for its tigers.

50-53. Lead would be too vulgar a thing to form the coffin around her shroud (*cerecloth*) in the obscure grave. Neither would silver do, since that is ten times less valuable than gold. In the sixteenth century a pound of gold was worth a little more than ten pounds of silver.

55-57. An angel was a gold coin, generally worth a little more than two dollars. It bore on one side an engraved (*insculped*) likeness of St. Michael slaying the dragon. The angel in the golden bed is Portia's picture, which the prince expects to find inside of the casket.

63. **A carrion Death:** a skull or death's-head from which the flesh has fallen away.

67-68. Many a man has sold his life for an empty show, like the golden outside of this casket.

72. **Your answer had not been inscrolled:**
Fare you well, your suit is cold.

That is, it would not have been inscrolled in such words as

"Fare you well," etc. For then the "inscrolled" answer would have been a very different statement.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

What trait of Morocco's character is shown by his remarks on the silver casket? By his choice of the golden one? How far is Morocco's character summed up in line 70? What is the significance of the skull in the golden casket?

Act II. Scene VIII.

FIRST HINT OF ANTONIO'S DANGER

4. The villain Jew with outcries raised the Duke. Although the Jews were hated, they were so powerful through their great wealth that the magistrates were forced to pay some attention to their complaints. How far has Shylock deserved such epithets as *villain Jew* and *dog Jew?*

25. Let good Antonio look he keep his day: let him be sure that he pays his debt to Shylock on the appointed day. This and the next speech prepare us for Antonio's coming danger.

27. Reasoned: spoke with.

28. The narrow seas. See note to Act III, Scene i, line 4.

42. Mind of love: loving mind.

48. Affection wondrous sensible: feeling wonderfully sensitive.

52. His embracéd heaviness: the melancholy to which his mind clings.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

Why is Shylock's conduct reported here, instead of being shown on the stage? Would Salarino report it with justice to the Jew? What hints of coming misfortune occur in this

scene? What new evidence have we of Antonio's love for Bassanio? Does the scene as a whole make us hate Shylock or sympathize with him?

Act II. Scene IX.

CHOICE OF THE SILVER CASKET

Unlike Morocco, who had some magnanimous traits, the Prince of Arragon is narrow and conceited; and this is shown by his choice of that casket which gives a man "as much as he deserves."

3. **To his election:** to his choice of the caskets.

19. **And so I have addressed me:** and so I have prepared myself.

26. **By the fool multitude:** for the fool multitude.

27. **Fond eye.** *Fond* regularly means *foolish* in Shakespeare.

28. Scanned:

Which pries | not to | th' inter | yor, but like | the mart | let.

30. **In the force and road of casualty:** exposed to the force of misfortune and lying in its very path.

32. **Jump with:** agree with.

38. **Be honorable:** be covered with honors.

41-49. Are these lines noble sentiment? How willingly would Arragon let them be applied to himself? What is the figure of speech used?

44. **Should cover that stand bare:** should keep their hats on, who now must take them off to supposed superiors.

51. **Will assume desert:** will take it for granted that I deserve Portia.

55. **Schedule:** simply a written paper.

61-62. You have offended by your arrogant choice and have no right to judge.

63. This scroll is in the same meter as that in the golden casket. *Fire* and *tried* are each read as two syllables.

68. **I wis:** I know.

70. Marry whom you will. What has Arragon promised about marrying another woman? Does this mean that Arragon is released from his vow, or simply that any marriage of his would be foolish? (See what he says below, line 77.)

72. You are sped: you are disposed of.

78. Patiently to bear my wroth: to bear my misfortune. Notice how Portia takes up the rime with *moth* in the next line.

80. O, these deliberate fools! How truly does this sum up Arragon's character?

85. What would my lord? Does Portia say this to a servant in earnest or in jest? Why should she feel especially merry just now?

89. He bringeth sensible regreets: greetings which will give you a keen sensation of pleasure.

89-95. Does Portia regard this as fine poetry or untimely bombast?

98. High-day: holiday, or high-flown.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

How would the play have suffered if this scene had been a mere repetition of the choice of the golden casket? In what ways is it not a repetition of that scene? How would the play have suffered if this scene had been omitted? What connection is there between the contents of the silver casket and the motto on its lid? How does the last line of the scene prepare the audience for what is coming? What word in line 87 had suggested to Nerissa that this new arrival might be Bassanio?

Act III. Scene I.

SHYLOCK'S CRUEL PURPOSE IS REVEALED

When Shylock first made the bargain with Antonio, he probably did it with mixed motives, and had not definitely resolved what he would do if the bond proved forfeit. But since then his daughter's flight and the suspicion that she was aided

by Antonio's friends have stirred his hatred to white heat. At this critical moment Antonio by his misfortunes is placed in the power of the vindictive Jew.

2. **Lives there unchecked:** remains uncontradicted. Where have we already heard a rumor of this misfortune? Notice that Shakespeare does not reveal all Antonio's losses at once but by degrees. First it is an uncertain rumor of one ship lost, then certainty of this, then reports of other shipwrecks, and finally the statement of Tubal, line 120, that Antonio will certainly become bankrupt. This gradual revelation is more impressive than sudden surprise, for it makes us share with Antonio himself "the hope deferred that maketh the heart sick."

4. **The narrow seas:** the English Channel. The Goodwins are Goodwin Sands, near the mouth of the Thames. Notice how deftly Salarino's phrase, "I think they call the place," gives the idea that we are in a foreign country where conceptions of English geography are vague.

7. **My Gossip Report.** Report, or Rumor, is personified as a gossiping old woman.

30. **The wings she flew withal:** the page's disguise in which she escaped with Lorenzo. *Withal* has various meanings, but frequently, as here, means simply *with*.

32. **It is the complexion:** it is the natural disposition. Notice how skilfully Shakespeare handles the narrow prejudice due to race hatred and its effect on even good men. Salanio and Salarino are kind and sympathetic toward Antonio, but are insolent toward the Jew in the hour of his deepest trouble.

61-76. In this speech we have a wonderful picture both of the injustice from which the Jews suffered and of the faults in their own character. "To those who . . . can remember Edmund Kean's delivery of this superb speech of wild wrath pleading its claim to some show of justice, there is excitement in recalling the wonderful eyes flashing out their red sparkles, the body writhing from head to foot, the arm thrown upward as witness to the recorded oath of vengeance. The attitude, as the voice, rose to a sublime climax when these words were uttered; then was a drop, both of person and tone, as he hissed out the closing sentence of deep concentrated malignity."—*Cowden-Clarke.*

77. Antonio is at his house. Why does Antonio stay at home? See Shylock's reason, line 47.

83. Genoa: the great commercial rival of Venice, on the north-western coast of Italy.

88. Frankfort: Frankfort on the Main, a city in Germany, famous for its commercial fairs.

92. I would my daughter were dead at my foot. Does Shylock say this in a spirit of revenge; or does he feel that his daughter by theft and flight with a Christian has dishonored his family and were better dead than a living disgrace?

112. Here in Genoa! one ship wrecked here in Italy in neighboring Genoa, besides the one lost in the distant English Channel.

126. It was my turquoise. The turquoise was especially appropriate as a love token, for it was considered a magical stone which changed color if the wearer's love died out or altered. In this reminiscence of his early days as Leah's lover Shylock draws our hearts to him in spite of his cruelty.

131. Fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. The officer is to be feed to arrest Antonio for his forfeited bond. How much of the three months mentioned in the bond must have elapsed? What journeys of Tubal and Jessica has Shakespeare mentioned to give us the impression that a long period of time has elapsed?

135. Meet me at our synagogue. Shylock believes that the terrible revenge which he is planning is righteous, in accordance with the old Mosaic law of "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." Hence, he is going to the synagogue to give to his purpose the consecration of religion.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

In line 133 what reason does Shylock give for demanding the pound of flesh? If this were his chief reason, would it be necessary for him to kill a man who was already ruined? In line 57 how much money does Shylock say that he has lost through Antonio? What light does this throw on the humanity of Shylock's financial transactions? How does Tubal help to advance the plot?

Act III. Scene II.

THE CHOICE OF THE LEADEN CASKET, lines 1-220

While the clouds have been gathering around Antonio, Bassanio, unconscious of his friend's danger, has been in the company of Portia at Belmont. Here the love of each for the other has grown stronger; and this affection gives dramatic intensity to the scene where Bassanio makes his choice of the caskets. We already know the contents of these caskets, and the types of men who are misled by the gold and silver ones; hence we are prepared to appreciate the scene as we should not have been earlier in the play.

1. **Pause a day or two.** In line 3 this becomes, *Forbear awhile,* and in line 9, *I would detain you here some month or two.* Notice that the time mentioned keeps increasing.

6. **Hate counsels not in such a quality:** that is, in such a manner.

7-8. **But lest you should not understand me well,—**
And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought.

A maiden cannot speak her mind as a man can, but can only think. Yet if you desire to win me as wife by choice of the caskets, lest you should not understand what kind of woman I really am, I wish you would stay and learn to know me better. Portia is too noble to win any man, even her loved Bassanio, on false pretences.

15. **That have o'erlooked me:** that have bewitched me by their glances.

20. **Though yours, not yours.** The second *yours* is pronounced as two syllables. The next sentence means, If it prove so (i.e., that you choose the wrong casket, so that I am yours in love but not your wife) then let fortune be punished for giving you the wrong casket; but I shall not deserve punishment, for I shall obey my father's will and give you up.

26. **Upon the rack, Bassanio! then confess.** Torture on the rack was used in the Middle Ages to extort confessions of treason from supposed traitors. To escape by death from such

torture, prisoners frequently confessed crimes which they had never committed. Portia alludes to this fact in lines 32-33.

29. Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love: which makes me fear that I may lose the enjoying of my love.

44. Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end: an allusion to the common poetic fancy that the swan sang before it died.

49. The flourish when true subjects bow. At the coronation of English sovereigns, the moment of their crowning was announced by a flourish of trumpets.

51. Dulcet sounds in break of day. There was a charming old custom of waking the bridegroom on his wedding morning by music under his window.

55. Young Alcides. Alcides, or Hercules, has already been mentioned. (See note to Act II, Scene i, line 35.) Certain gods, angry at the perfidy of Laomedon, the Trojan king, had sent a sea-monster to ravage his dominions; and to appease this monster the Trojans were forced to yield him from time to time a maiden chosen by lot. The last lot had fallen on Hesione, the king's own daughter, who was exposed to the monster as "the virgin tribute." But Hercules, who had stopped at Troy in passing, upon promise of receiving some splendid horses from Laomedon, killed the monster and saved Hesione. Portia thinks Bassanio as stately as Hercules, the ideal of Grecian manhood, but inspired "with much more love," since Hercules ventured his life for the sake of the horses, not for love of Hesione. *The Dardanian wives,* line 58, are the Trojan women who watch Hercules conquer.

63-72. SONG. This song certainly contains a hint as to the proper casket. It reminds Bassanio that a passing fancy (as opposed to deep love) arises from the eye, which is attracted by external beauty; that this fancy dies almost at its birth; and that all true lovers will ring its knell and have nothing further to do with it. No wonder that Bassanio decides not to judge by appearances. Was Portia or Nerissa probably responsible for this song? Has Nerissa anything at stake on Bassanio's choice? Has she praised Bassanio earlier in the play? Who commands the music, Portia or Nerissa? Had there been music before Morocco and Arragon made their choice? If Portia planned for this

song, did she disobey her father? What effect would this same song have had on Morocco and Arragon?

82. **His**: an old possessive form of *it,* used instead of *its.*

85-87. **Mars**: the Roman war-god.

Livers white as milk: a symbol of cowardice.

Valor's excrement: valor's hair or beard.

89. **'Tis purchased by the weight**: in the form of cosmetics. In line 91 Bassanio puns on *weight,* saying that those who use the most are the lightest, that is, the silliest.

94. **Upon supposéd fairness**: on heads mistakenly supposed to be beautiful by nature.

99. **Veiling an Indian beauty.** Superficial ornament is like a rich Oriental scarf veiling the repulsive tattooed visage of a savage belle.

102. **Hard food for Midas.** Midas, a greedy and foolish king, petitioned the gods that everything which he touched might be turned into gold. The request was granted. But Midas had forgotten that he must touch his food in eating it, and soon found that every mouthful turned to gold. He would have starved on this "hard food" if the gods had not mercifully recalled the power they had given him.

103. **Thou pale and common drudge**: pale silver passed as small coin through everybody's fingers.

114. Read so that the pause between the speeches fills the place of the syllable missing between *surfeit* and *what.*

127. **And leave itself unfurnished.** The one eye finished would so dazzle the painter that he could not see to furnish it with its proper surroundings, the rest of the face.

How far: as far as. Portia is as far superior to her pictures as her picture is superior to my power of praising it.

131. **The continent . . . . of my fortune**: that which contains the statement of my fortune.

133. **Chance as fair**: succeed as well hereafter.

140-149. Notice that this speech of Bassanio's and the previous one of Portia's are both in rime. Rime sometimes gives a song-like effect which is appropriate for sudden outbursts of emotion. In the following speech Portia resumes blank verse which is more in keeping with her mood of dignified humility.

141. **I come by note, to give and to receive**: I come

according to the scroll's directions to give and to receive a kiss.

160. **To term in gross:** to sum up as a whole.

161. **Is an unlessoned girl.** Is Portia uneducated? How many languages can she speak? (See Act I, Scene ii, line 75.) In Act IV she has education enough to pass herself off as a great lawyer and scholar. What has she not yet learned which Bassanio is to teach her? Notice the humility of this great heiress in her anxiety to be a true wife to an almost penniless lover.

173. **I give them with this ring.** Shakespeare brings the ring to our attention here because it is to play an important part in the story later.

193. **You can wish none from me:** you are so happy now that you cannot wish anything which I could give you.

200. **I beheld the maid.** Nerissa is not a servant but a companion and social equal to Portia, although less rich. Gratiano is not marrying beneath him.

201. **For intermission:** for aimless idleness is no more to my taste than to yours.

ANTONIO'S MESSAGE TO BASSANIO, lines 221-330

Notice how skilfully Shakespeare brings his different groups of characters together here. Lorenzo and Jessica had not intended to visit Belmont; but lines 230-233 show how naturally they were led there. What motives may Salerio have had in bringing Shylock's child with him? (See lines 287-293.) The bad news of Salerio serves to bring out admirably the strength which is mingled with gentleness in Portia's character.

221. **Lorenzo and his infidel.** *Infidel* means *unbeliever* and is used of Jessica because she is a Jewess.

224. **The youth of my new interest here:** my rights here as Portia's chosen husband, which are only a few minutes old.

236. **Tell me how my good friend doth.** Notice Salerio's evasive answer.

240. **Nerissa, cheer yon stranger.** What has drawn away the attention of Portia so that she leaves to Nerissa the duty

of a hostess? See Portia's speech below. Bassanio is reading the letter while this conversation goes on.

242. **That royal merchant.** To realize the extent of Antonio's commerce, look up the countries mentioned in lines 271-272. All of these except Mexico were the common trading ground of the great Venetian merchants, who were frequently called *royal* because of their princely wealth and power. There is a bitter contrast between Gratiano's picture of Antonio in the word *royal* and the real state of Antonio which is revealed a moment later.

244. **We are the Jasons.** For the story of Jason see note to Act I, Scene i, line 170.

246. **Shrewd contents:** bad, ill-omened contents.

264. **Have engaged myself:** have put myself under bonds as debtor.

265. **His mere enemy:** his most thorough enemy. *Mere* originally meant *unmixed, unadulterated.*

279. **To confound:** to ruin.

281. **And doth impeach the freedom of the state:** holds up to contempt the pretended freedom and equal rights which Venice offers to Jews and other foreigners, if Venice now will not give him justice.

296. **Best-conditioned and unwearied spirit.** *Most* must be supplied in thought before *unwearied.*

305. This was probably read:

Shall lose | a hair | thor ough | Bassan | io's fault.

315. **A merry cheer:** a merry countenance. This was a common Shakesperean meaning of *cheer.*

316. **Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.** Does Portia mean that the money she is spending on Bassanio's friend is a high price for a husband, or does she mean that Bassanio was dear bought by the suffering and anxiety through which she went before he chose the right casket? Would the first meaning be courteous to Bassanio? Would it be in harmony with Portia's character? Would she consider the worth of Antonio's bond a high price? (See lines 300 and 309.)

322. **Between you and I:** correct grammar in Shakespeare's day.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

Where does Portia tell Bassanio that she knows which is the correct casket? Had she told as much to any of her other suitors? Does Portia believe that a man who loves her will choose the right casket? (See lines 41 and 61.) How much emotion had Portia shown when the other suitors made their choice? How much does she show here? Why does Bassanio wish to make his choice at once? Why does Portia wish him to delay? How far can you show that the remarks of Bassanio, lines 73-107, are true to-day? What traits of Portia are shown in her speech, lines 150-176? What effect does it have on Bassanio? What noble traits of character in Bassanio and Portia are brought out by the reading of Antonio's letter? What does Jessica say about Shylock's feeling toward Antonio? How soon after the signing of the bond must Shylock have said these words?

Act III. Scene III.

ANTONIO AS PRISONER

6. Thou call'dest me dog. Had Antonio called him so? (See Act I, Scene iii, lines 129-131.)

14. Dull-eyed fool: sad-faced fool. Notice how often Shylock speaks of compassion as a mark of folly.

25. Grant this forfeiture to hold: permit it to hold good at law.

26-29. The duke must allow the law to take its course, for a denial of the free commercial privileges that strangers have with us in Venice would produce great scandal against the justice of his government.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

Why does Antonio say that Shylock persecutes him? Is this one of Shylock's reasons? (See Act III, Scene i, line 133.) Is it his only reason? How long does Antonio expect to live? Why does he wish to see Bassanio? Does Antonio seem con-

scious that he has ever wronged Shylock? Has he? How is his conduct to be explained?

Act III. Scene IV.

PORTIA AND NERISSA LEAVE BELMONT

2. **A true conceit Of god-like amity:** a true conception of what the noble friendship between Antonio and Bassanio is.

8-9. You would be prouder of parting from your bridegroom to save his friend than of any ordinary act of charity.

12. **Waste the time:** pass away the time. Why would the modern meaning of *waste* fail to make sense here?

20. **The semblance of my soul:** the man so much like my Bassanio, who is as dear to me as my own soul.

22. **This comes too near the praising of myself.** This refers to Portia's mention of the money she is spending. Though brought up amid wealth, she is remarkably free from purse-proud arrogance.

25. **The husbandry and manage:** the care and management. Lorenzo was Bassanio's friend; otherwise Portia would never have trusted him with the oversight of her estates on such short notice.

49. **Padua.** The university of Padua was famous for its great scholars and lawyers. If Portia has a friend and relative in one of these men, she will be able to find every possible legal argument which could help Antonio.

52. **With imagined speed Unto the traject:** *Imagined* means *imaginable.* The ferry-boats near Venice were called *traghetti,* hence the word *traject,* meaning *ferry.*

66. And speak in a shrill voice like that of a boy in his teens.

72. **I could not do withal:** I couldn't help it. The masterly way in which Portia describes these conceited youngsters is another evidence of her intelligence and wit.

77. **Jacks:** a term of contempt. Portia in her man's dress does not practise later any of these "raw tricks of these bragging Jacks." She exposes them with delightful ridicule but is too much of a lady to mimic them.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

Why does Portia think that Antonio must be like Bassanio? Is she right in thinking so? Why is it better that Jessica should be at Belmont than at Antonio's trial? Does Portia say she is confident that she can save Antonio? Would she be so merry if she did not feel confident of it? Has she formed a definite plan? (See line 81.)

Act III. Scene V.

LORENZO AND JESSICA AT BELMONT

This little scene helps to fill in the time while Portia is imagined as journeying to Venice. By its homely mirth it also rests us and enables us to save up our energies for the great trial scene following. There is something puzzling and tantalizing about the character of Jessica. She certainly has no such high ideals of right and wrong as Portia has; she does several things which we cannot justify, and seems to feel no particular remorse about them; yet we cannot help liking her, especially when she pays such a noble tribute to Portia.

3. I fear you: I fear for you.

5. My agitation of the matter. Perhaps Launcelot means *cogitation.*

18. When I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother. Scylla was a rock and Charybdis a whirlpool. Between the two there was a narrow and dangerous passage for ships, where nothing but the utmost skill of the pilot could prevent shipwreck on the rock or in the whirlpool. Homer, the ancient Greek poet, represents his hero Ulysses as steering safely through this dangerous strait. Launcelot is not as fortunate as Ulysses in trying to pilot Jessica heavenward between her father and mother.

53. They have all stomachs: a play on words. *Stomach,* besides its modern meaning, frequently meant *appetite.*

58. Another pun on *cover,* which meant both to cover the table and to put on one's hat. Lorenzo uses it in the first sense; then Launcelot takes it in the second sense, and answers that he knows his duty as a servant better than to keep on his hat before his master.

60. More quarreling with occasion: more quibbling on every possible word.

70. How his words are suited: How badly his words are suited to the occasion! What an ability he has to use the right word in the wrong place!

74. Garnished (decked out with showy words) like him, that for a tricksy word (a word liable to upset his thought) give defiance to all sensible meaning.

82. And if on earth he does not mean it (to live an upright life, referring back to line 79) then he doesn't deserve heaven.

95. I shall digest it. Jessica proposes to have her praise of Lorenzo served up as first course while she has an appetite. Lorenzo teasingly answers that it ought to come later when more palatable things combined with it will help him to swallow it.

I'll set you forth: I'll describe you in glowing colors.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

Has Jessica turned Christian? Does she show any emotion at the mention of her father? What is her opinion of Portia? How much opportunity has she had to know Portia? Is her opinion correct? Does she show any jealousy because Portia is more beautiful than she?

ACT IV. SCENE I.

SHYLOCK RESISTS THE DUKE'S PLEA FOR MERCY, lines 1-118

The following scene forms what is technically known as the *denouement* or "solution" of the play. The method by which Antonio is to escape from Shylock has been growing a more and more complicated problem, as one hope after another has failed. Here that problem is solved by the device of Portia, which saves the merchant and ends the story of the bond. The

ring episode of the Fifth Act is added to give the play a lighter and more hopeful ending than would be possible directly after the harrowing trial scene.

In this great scene comedy almost becomes tragedy as argument after argument fails to move Shylock to mercy. Suddenly hope shines out from an unexpected quarter; and our anxiety subsides in the blessed sense of relief after danger. Yet, though our interest is mainly on the side of Antonio, we cannot resist a certain sympathy for his enemy. Shylock voices the wrongs of a people who have been sinned against even more deeply than they have sinned. The Jew also gains a certain pathos from his isolation. Even in the hour of his vindictive triumph he stands alone, wringing concessions from reluctant enemies who are the first to trample on him when they can.

1. **Duke.** The Duke or Doge would not actually have presided in such a court. Shakespeare's legal details are not all true to the procedure of Venetian law; but this does not harm the play. The presence of the Doge gives dignity to the trial and shows the general interest felt in Antonio's fate. *What* is not an exclamation of surprise but simply introduces the following remark, like our *well.*

7. **Your Grace hath ta'en great pains.** How did Antonio know this? (See Act III, Scene ii, line 282.) Has Shylock already given the Duke a definite answer? (See line 35.)

Qualify: soften, moderate.

10. **His envy's reach:** his hatred's reach. Is Antonio an object of envy in the modern sense of the word?

16. **Make room.** There is evidently a crowd.

17. **And I think so too.** Does the Duke really think Shylock's cruelty a pretense? (See lines 3-6.) Why does he say this?

24. **Loose the forfeiture:** give up your right to the forfeited pound of flesh.

36. **And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn.** To the distorted imagination of Shylock his horrible act has become a religious duty.

38-39. **Let the danger light Upon your charter.** Shylock speaks as if Venice, like the English cities, held her freedom under a royal charter which might be revoked if she gave unjust

judgment. As a matter of fact, Venice was an independent state, responsible to no government except her own.

43. **It is my humor:** it is my whim.

47. **A gaping pig:** a stuffed pig served up at a feast with a lemon in its mouth.

49. **Sings i' the nose:** utters a shrill nasal sound. Certain men cannot control themselves when hearing this disagreeable sound, for affection (the impression made by the noise) being ruler of their passions, sways these passions to liking or hate as the impression is pleasant or unpleasant.

56. **A woollen bag-pipe:** a bag-pipe in which the bag was of woollen.

62. **A losing suit.** Does Shylock mean a suit which he will probably lose, or a suit which, even if won, will mean the loss of money?

65. **I am not bound to please thee.** Notice the great difference in the attitude of Shylock toward the Duke and toward Bassanio? He is a man who naturally cringes to power and despises helplessness.

68. **Every offence is not a hate at first.** Bassanio uses *offence* in the sense of resentment, as in our modern phrase *to take offence*. Shylock misunderstands him, taking *offence* to mean an injury. Of what past injuries would Shylock think in this connection?

70. Remember you are arguing with the Jew on whom all arguments are wasted.

87. **I would not draw them; I would have my bond.** *Draw* here is equivalent to *accept*. Shylock for the sake of his revenge is capable of refusing a chance to make as clear profit a sum equivalent to over $250,000 to-day. So powerful is hate in even an avaricious heart.

88-89. In these two short lines Shakespeare contrasts with masterly skill two rival ideas of life, the Jewish and the Christian. The Jewish idea is that we have certain laws, those of God and those of men, which we must keep; there our duty begins and ends. If we have kept these laws we need fear no judgment. The Christian idea is that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," and that all must "be merciful that ye may obtain mercy." Each of the speakers here is unable to

understand the other's point of view; and the constant misunderstanding between people of different training and different prejudices explains why we can see redeeming traits in both parties, and yet neither party can see them in the other. Shylock's present speech is an unrelieved picture of the bad side of Christianity alone, just as Antonio's previous one sums up Shylock's faults alone. It should be noticed that neither Shylock nor his Christian enemies attempt to deny these mutual accusations.

104. **Upon my power I may dismiss this court.** The Duke, by right of his authority, could put off the trial to a later date. He is using every possible device to postpone, at least, Antonio's fate. The remark makes natural the introduction of Nerissa and Portia.

SHYLOCK RESISTS PORTIA'S PLEA FOR MERCY, lines 119-304

127. **None that thou hast wit enough to make.** Shylock's contempt for the intelligence of his enemies is characteristic of a shrewd, hard-headed worldling, who considers sentiment as folly. Where has he shown this attitude before?

129. **For thy life let justice be accused:** let justice be accused for doing wrong in allowing such a monster to live.

131. **Pythagoras:** an ancient philosopher of Greece, who believed that the bodies of men were inhabited by the souls of dead animals and the bodies of animals in like manner by the souls of men. This strange idea, known as The Transmigration of Souls, has been held by great numbers of people in various forms and at different times.

144. **Learnéd doctor:** a doctor of laws, not a physician.

163. **To let him lack:** to make him lack. His youth must not lessen your opinion of his ability.

170. **Take your place.** Portia takes the judge's seat on the raised platform below and in front of the Doge.

171. **The difference That holds this present question:** the dispute or difference of opinion which causes this present trial.

173. **Informéd throughly:** informed thoroughly. *Through* and *thorough* were used interchangeably.

178. **In such rule:** so regular in its proceedings. Shylock has taken good care to comply with every legal formality.

180. **You stand within his danger:** you are in danger from his hate.

184. **The quality of mercy is not strained:** the special characteristic of mercy is that it does not come on compulsion but is purely voluntary. This noble speech shows how well Portia deserves the praise which Jessica gave her in the preceding scene.

201. **And that same prayer doth teach us all to render The deeds of mercy.** "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors."

206. **My deeds upon my head!** So the accusers of Christ said to Pilate, "His blood be on us and on our children."

208. **Is he not able to discharge the money?** Does Portia ask this question on purpose to entrap the Jew so that he can claim nothing later; or does she think that he may really be persuaded by money? (See Act III, Scene ii, line 301.)

220. **'Twill be recorded for a precedent.** Portia knows that she can save Antonio; and the scene which is tragic for others is not so for her. Perhaps she feels a touch of amusement in thus laying down the law for her husband.

223. **A Daniel come to judgment!** In the *History of Susannah,* one of the Apocryphal Books of the Bible, two judges condemn an innocent woman to death. But the prophet Daniel interposes, acts as judge, and shows by the conflicting testimony of the judges that they themselves were guilty and the woman innocent.

233. **Nearest the merchant's heart.** This is evidently the wording of the bond. Is it the wording which Shylock first proposed to Antonio? (See Act I, Scene iii, line 151.)

245. **You must prepare your bosom for his knife.** Here this play, comedy though it is, comes close to tragedy.

247-249. The intention and meaning of the law, which was framed for cases like this, applies fully to this case, where the penalty is due.

251. **More elder:** correct at one time, instead of *elder.*

255. **Are there balance?** Are there balances? Notice Shylock's forethought; he already has the scales ready. There is

something terrible in his painstaking preparation for this ghastly act.

257. **On your charge:** at your cost. Does Portia say this because a surgeon is needed or as a test of Shylock's character?

275. **Speak me fair in death:** speak well of me when I am dead.

277. **Had not once a love.** *Love* and *lover* in Elizabethan times were used of friends of the same sex as well as in their modern meaning.

281. **I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.** Antonio puns on the literal and the metaphorical meaning of this phrase. Such pathetic attempts to be merry in the face of death are common in actual life and inevitably touching.

282. **I am married to a wife.** What line in Antonio's preceding speech suggests this thought to Bassanio? How is Bassanio responsible for Antonio's position, and how does this increase the younger man's anguish?

288. **Your wife would give you little thanks for that.** Is Portia angry or amused? To whom has Bassanio proposed to sacrifice her? Would a man in the excitement of such a moment realize what he was saying? Does Portia ever speak of it afterward?

295. **These be the Christian husbands.** Shylock takes their excited exclamations as deliberate offers, and indulges in a flash of sarcasm.

296. **Barrabas** (in the Bible Barábbas) was a thief who was released to the Jewish multitude in the place of Christ. The name was also that of the villain in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, a play well known to Shakespeare's audience. The worst of Jewish thieves, according to Shylock, would be preferable to a Christian as a husband.

298. **Pursue sentence:** proceed to give judgment.

SHYLOCK CAUGHT IN HIS OWN TRAP, lines 305-407

306. **No jot of blood.** Noble as is Portia's attitude, her legal arguments are not all sound. Her point about the "jot of blood" is a mere splitting of hairs. So is her second point that

Shylock must take exactly a pound, no more and no less. Contrary to the belief of many people, the law always considers the spirit of a bargain, not the mere letter, and cannot demand in the performance of a contract any impossible conditions. On the other hand, Portia's third argument, brought out in lines 348-362, is good law, and alone sufficient to win her case. Many think that this last point was given to Portia by Bellario, and that her two previous arguments, clever but unsound, were the product of her woman's wit. But perhaps Shakespeare wished us to imagine all three points as good at law, although part of them really are not.

328. **In the substance:** in weight.

331. **In the estimation of a hair:** by the value or weight of a hair.

334. **I have you on the hip.** Gratiano has already hurled back at Shylock his own phrases, "a Daniel," "a learnéd judge." But the phrase, "I have you on the hip," is also one which Shylock had used of Antonio (Act I, Scene iii, line 47), and which now comes back on him like a boomerang.

335. **Why doth the Jew pause? Take thy forfeiture.** Shylock still has the right to take Antonio's life on condition that he lose his own afterward for drawing blood. But has Portia any idea that he will do this? If she had, would she have refused in line 320 to let Bassanio setttle? Should we admire Shylock more or less if he had taken such a desperate step?

342. **Shall I not have barely my principal?** There is something small about the way in which Shylock haggles for money when aims so much more important have been defeated. Compare this speech with lines 228-230.

356. **'Gainst all other voice:** not depending on any other voice.

362. **Formerly by me rehearsed:** stated by me above. *Formerly* is a technical legal term.

373. **Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.** The state may reduce its claim on Shylock's fortune to a fine; but Antonio must have his full half.

374. **Nay, take my life and all.** Here again, in spite of his ferocious cruelty and cringing sordidness, Shylock touches a chord of sympathy which we cannot resist. The fortune of

which these men are to rob him has been his life-work, the goal of his ambition for years; and he is a gray-haired man, too old to begin life over again. The great actor Kean, in the part of Shylock, would make his audience hate him up to this point, and here, by the pathos in his voice, turn their hatred to pity.

379-380. There is a sharp contrast between the thoughtless roughness of Gratiano and Antonio's more magnanimous attitude. Antonio proposes that Shylock shall retain half his fortune (the half which would have gone to the state); that Antonio shall have temporary use of the other half; and that the whole fortune shall on Shylock's death go to his daughter Jessica; furthermore that Shylock must become a Christian. Antonio means these proposals kindly; but Shylock's chief joy in life has been the management of his property, and he is deprived at the same time of that and of the religion of his fathers.

399. **Thou shouldst have had ten more:** thou shouldst have had a jury of twelve to hang thee.

405. **Your leisure serves you not:** is not at your disposal.

406. **Gratify this gentleman:** give him a fee for his services. Fees to judges were then the custom, as fees to lawyers are now.

PORTIA ASKS FOR BASSANIO'S RING, lines 408-457

410-412. **In lieu whereof:** in place of which we freely reward you courteous pains with three thousand ducats due unto the Jew. *Ducats* depends on *withal*, which is a preposition and equivalent to *with*.

418. **Never yet more mercenary:** never more mercenary than to desire a feeling of satisfaction in duty well done.

419. **Know me when we meet again.** To Bassanio this simply means that the judge is glad to have met him and hopes to see him again; but what double meaning has it from Portia's lips? Has she already planned to get Bassanio's ring, or does this idea occur to her during his next speech?

451. **Commandment:** pronounced *com-mánd-e-mént*, and spelled with the extra *e* in some of the old editions.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

Had you been in Shylock's place with all his past injuries in your memory, what would you have done? What reason does Shylock give for his cruelty? Has he previously mentioned other reasons? Would these other reasons impress his audience in court? What traits of character does Antonio show in this scene? How often does Shylock mention "justice?" How often "law?" Do the two words mean the same thing to him? What is the purpose of Portia's long speech about mercy? Mention instances in history which illustrate the truth of this speech. What effect does it have on Shylock? Would it have affected him differently if Christians had always shown him the "deeds of mercy?" What satirical remarks about Christians does Shylock make during this scene? Which of them are just and which are not? How just to Shylock is the final arrangement about his property? Would Bassanio have sent his ring after Portia if Antonio had not urged him? Can Bassanio be blamed for his conduct? To what two benefactors would Bassanio have seemed ungrateful if he had refused to give up the ring? What mention of Jessica and Lorenzo connects their story with that of the bond?

Act IV. Scene II.

PORTIA AND NERISSA WIN THEIR HUSBANDS' RINGS

This is a short scene, inserted, not for its own sake, but to dispose of various loose threads in the story.

6. **Upon more advice**: upon more reflection.
15. **Old swearing**: plenty of swearing.

QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

What deed is it which the Jew is to sign? How much does the story of the rings advance during this scene?

Act V. Scene I.

Moonlight and happiness at Belmont, lines 1-88

The story of the three caskets ended with the marriage of Portia and Bassanio; that of the bond with Shylock's defeat in the trial scene. In this last act the story of the rings and the adventures of Lorenzo and Jessica end happily together. In introducing this scene of beautiful poetry and gentle fun after the stress and strain of the trial, Shakespeare is true to real life; for in real life great dangers darken our existence for a time, then pass away and are forgotten amid merry companions and hopes for the future.

1. **In such a night as this.** For these happy lovers all the love-stories of the past become associated with the romantic beauty of the night around them.

4. **Troilus** was one of the youngest and noblest of the sons of Priam. During the siege of Troy he fell in love with Cressida, a fascinating but shallow woman, who eventually left him to go to the Grecian camp, and there forgot him for another lover. For a long time Troilus believed her true and watched for her from the Trojan walls. At last he learned of her fickleness; and, losing faith in all women, tried to forget her in the excitement of battle. He died fighting for his country against the Greeks. His story has been told in English literature by our first great poet Chaucer, by Shakespeare's contemporaries, and by Shakespeare himself.

7. **Thisbe** was a Babylonian maiden loved by Pyramus. As their parents opposed their marriage they agreed to steal from their homes and meet at Ninus' tomb. Here Thisbe arrived first; and while waiting for Pyramus spied a lioness which had just killed an ox. Thisbe fled, but dropped her mantle in flight; and the lioness smeared it with the ox's blood. Pryamus, arriving later, found Thisbe's bloody mantle, and, thinking that his love was murdered, killed himself in despair. In time Thisbe returned, and discovering Pyramus dead, killed herself also. Shakespeare had earlier turned this story into roaring farce in the last act of *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

10. **Dido** was queen of Carthage. She fell in love with Æneas, and was deserted by him when he sailed away to Italy. The willow which she is represented as holding was a symbol of unrequited love. Her story is told in Book IV of Vergil's *Æneïd.*

13. **Medea** was the wife of Jason. Their story has already been told in note to Act I, Scene i, line 170. By the use of magic herbs she restored to youth the aged Æson, her husband's father.

16. **And with an unthrift love:** and with a good-for-nothing lover.

23. **I would out-night you:** I would surpass you in mentioning famous nights.

31. **By holy crosses.** In the later Middle Ages it was common for people of all ranks to kneel and pray before the crosses which were erected in great numbers by the wayside, over the graves of saints or birthplaces of great men.

39. **Sola, sola!** Launcelot imitates the horn blown by a *post* or courier, and in calling for Master Lorenzo resolutely refuses to see that individual.

49. **Expect their coming:** await their coming. The usual meaning of *expect* in Shakespeare.

59. **Patines of bright gold.** The patine is a golden dish used in the service of the Lord's Supper. The reference here may be either to the stars themselves or to the small fragments of cloud afloat in the sky, which in broad moonlight sometimes take on a golden tinge. Some of the old editions read, *patterns of bright gold,* which possibly was what Shakespeare wrote.

62. **Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins:** singing in concert and in tune with the cherubim, who are forever young. *Im* is the plural ending of cherub; and to this foreign ending Shakespeare has added the English plural ending *s.* According to an ancient idea of astronomy the universe was composed of a series of concentric spheres—all revolving around the earth as a center—one for each of the seven planets then known to astronomers, and one for the fixed stars. All of these concentric orbs were forever turning to melody, which was called the Music of the Spheres. Shakespeare represents this music as harmonizing with the song of the angels in heaven.

63-65. Music as beautiful as that of the spheres is the lan-

guage in which immortal souls call to each other; but while this earthly body encloses it (the soul) we cannot hear it (the harmony.)

66. **Diana**: the goddess of the moon.

69. **I am never merry when I hear sweet music.** The powerful effect which music has on Jessica shows something sadder, deeper, and more spiritual in her nature than had yet appeared. She has done wrong in robbing her father and squandering his money in Genoa; but that was because she was young and unwisely trained. She will make a lovable wife for Lorenzo in spite of all.

80. **Orpheus**: a legendary poet of Greece. He was said to be the son of one of the Muses, and sang so sweetly that not only animals, but even trees and stones, left their places and drew near to hear him.

87. **Erebus**: the dark underworld of the Greek mythology.

RETURN OF PORTIA AND NERISSA, lines 89-126

Portia and Nerissa enter at a little distance from the lovers, who do not notice them at first. Why does not Lorenzo hear their voices at once? What is the stage direction just before he speaks to them?

91. **So shines a good deed.** Why should the thought of good deeds appeal especially to Portia just now?

99. **Nothing is good . . . without respect**: nothing is good except according to the circumstances under which it is heard.

103. **When neither is attended**: when neither has attention paid to it.

109. **The moon sleeps with Endymion.** Endymion was a beautiful Greek boy, who was loved by Diana, the goddess of the moon. He was charmed into eternal sleep on Mt. Latmos, where Diana came nightly to visit him. Is the moon still shining or retired behind a cloud? (See line 92, and notice that Lorenzo does not recognize Portia's face but her voice.) When does the moon shine out again? (See line 125.)

115. **Which speed**: which prosper.

121. A tucket: a blowing of trumpets to announce some person's arrival.

PORTIA'S PLAYFUL QUARREL WITH HER HUSBAND, lines 127-307

127. We should hold day with the Antipodes: although the sun is shining on the other side of the world, we should have a light as bright as it is there if we could have the light of your beauty.

129. Give light, but . . . not be light: a pun, since *light* often meant *frivolous.*

132. God sort all! God arrange all for the best!

136. In all sense: with good reason.

141. This breathing courtesy: this wordy ceremony (made up of nothing but empty breath).

142. Gratiano and Nerissa have been talking together at one side. Notice how innocently Portia asks, "What's the matter?" when she knows perfectly.

148. A *posy* was a motto inscribed on the inside of a ring. It is certainly not very delicate in Gratiano to say that this motto was like those engraved on knives in a cutlery store.

156. You should have been respective: you should have been mindful of your promise.

162. A little scrubbéd boy, No higher than thyself. *Scrubbéd* means *insignificant.* Nerissa certainly must be enjoying the situation here.

179. My lord Bassanio gave his ring away. Gratiano is so blunt and thoughtless that he blurts out everything, utterly regardless of Bassanio's awkward predicament.

199. The virtue of the ring: the power or significance of the ring, for it was a token of Portia's love and his claim on her.

201. Contain the ring: retain the ring.

205. Wanted the modesty: what man is there so unreasonable that he had no more modesty than to urge the gift of the thing held as a sacred object.

208. I'll die for 't but some woman had the ring. Portia is purposely drawing Bassanio on. In the next line he falls into the trap and swears by his honor and his immortal soul that he did not give it to a woman.

217. **I was beset with shame and courtesy:** I was overcome with shame at the thought of refusing this gift to my benefactor and with a realization of what courtesy demanded.

221. **Had you been there.** Notice how neatly Portia turns Bassanio's own words against him. Bassanio says that she herself could not have said no to this persuasive doctor; and Portia immediately answers that she never will say no to that doctor, no matter what he requests.

230. **Watch me like Argus.** In Greek mythology Argus was the watchful guardian with a hundred eyes who was lulled to sleep at last by the music of the god Hermes.

245. **Swear by your double self.** Portia plays on the words *doubly and double.* The first has its modern meaning; the second, as frequently in Shakespeare, means *deceitful.*

249. **For his wealth:** for his welfare.

253. **Advisedly:** intentionally.

294. **You drop manna.** Manna was the food with which the Israelites were mysteriously provided during their wanderings in the wilderness. There is an account of it in *Exodus* xvi, 14-36. What would have been the future outlook of Lorenzo and Jessica if Shylock's wealth had not been deeded to them?

296. **Not satisfied:** not satisfactorily informed.

298. **And charge us there upon inter'gatories:** a legal term, which is here equivalent to saying: Question us with the understanding that we will tell you the exact truth. Under certain conditions in the English law courts, a man was sent into the Crown office, and being there "charged upon interrogatories" was made to swear that he would "answer all things faithfully."

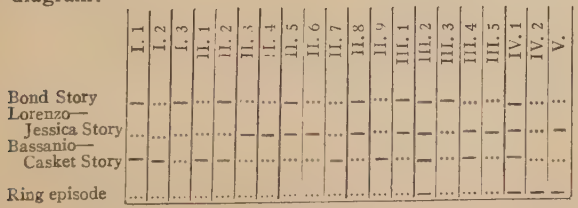
QUESTIONS ON THE SCENE

What is the value of the classical allusions at the beginning of this act? What phases of Jessica's character are shown in her dialogue with Lorenzo? Will Jessica ever try to see her father again? What dramatic purposes does the music serve? How many times in this scene are the moon and stars mentioned? What effect does this have on the picture in our imagination?

What difference is there in the conduct of Bassanio and Gratiano when their wives accuse them about the rings? Who had urged Bassanio to send the ring after the messenger? What generous trait does Bassanio show in not mentioning this? With what feelings in line 238 does Antonio call himself "the unhappy subject of these quarrels?" Why does Portia immediately drop her jesting tone and become the courteous hostess in answering him? Would the scene be more or less interesting if we were told in detail how Antonio's ships escaped? How is every one in this scene made happy at the end?

THE FOUR STORIES OF THE PLAY

This play gives an admirable example of Shakespeare's skill as a story-teller. In order to fill the play with life and action he has combined in it four different narratives. The first is that of Antonio's bond with Shylock; the second, the love romance of Lorenzo and Jessica; the third, the wooing of Portia by means of the casket. The fourth story, which is a sequel to the third, is the episode of the rings. It is distinctly separate from the third, since it is an incident of Portia's married life, not of her wooing. One of the most remarkable things about the *Merchant of Venice* is the way in which Shakespeare makes these four stories work together toward a common end, so that while reading any one of them we still keep up our interest in the others. Frequently the events of a single scene are made to affect two or three of these stories at once, as can be seen from the following diagram:



In two of these scenes, Act III, Scene ii, and Act IV, Scene i, all four stories, as the diagram makes clear, are involved. Act III, Scene ii, belongs mainly to the Bassanio-casket narrative; but the entrance of Lorenzo and Jessica introduces their romance into the scene of Portia's joy; and the news which Salerio brings in their company throws the shadow of the bond story over the lovers' happiness. Lastly, in this scene Portia gives Bassanio the ring about which the fourth story centers; and Bassanio makes the promise to keep it which later puts him in such an unfortunate position. Act IV, Scene i, belongs mainly to the bond story; but the presence of Portia connects it with the casket story; the disposition of Shylock's property assures us that Lorenzo and Jessica will never come to want; and the end deals with the ring episode. Besides the relationship outlined above, these four stories are woven into one another by many other ingenious devices. It will be interesting for a reader to go through the play scene by scene and to observe, by the aid of the diagram, the places where the various stories meet and coalesce.

GLOSSARY

Accomplished, furnished; III, iv, 61.
Accoutred, dressed; III, iv, 63.
Advised, cautious, heedful; I, i, 142.
An, if; I, ii, 96; II, iv, 10.
Anon, at once; II, ii, 125.
Approve, prove, confirm; III, ii, 79.
Argosy, large merchant ship; I, i, 9; III, i, 105; I, iii, 18; V, i, 276.
Attempt, tempt; IV, i, 421.

Baned, poisoned; IV, i, 46.
Bare, bare-headed; II, ix, 44.
Bate, abate; IV, i, 72.
Bated, reduced; III, iii, 32.
Beholding, beholden; I, iii, 106.
Beshrew, curse (often used jestingly); II, vi, 52.
Best-regarded, best looking, handsomest; II, i, 10.
Bottom, hold of a vessel; I, i, 42.
Break, forfeit a bond; I, iii, 137; become bankrupt; III, i, 120.
Burial, burial-place; I, i, 29.
By, at hand, near by; IV, i, 257; in regard to; I, ii, 58; for; II, ix, 26.

Cerecloth, a cloth dipped in melted wax to be used as a shroud; II, vii, 51.
Childhood proof, childhood's proof; I, i, 144.
Civil doctor, doctor of civil law; V, i, 210.
Civility, refinement; II, ii, 204.
Commends, commendations; II, ix, 90.
Commodity, merchandise; I, i, 178; traffic; III, iii, 27.
Conceit, understanding; I, i, 92; III, iv, 2; whim; III, v, 69.
Condition, character, nature; I, ii, 143.
Constant, self-possessed; III, ii, 250.
Contrary, wrong; I, ii, 104.
Contrive, conspire; IV, i, 352.
Cope, requite; IV, i, 412.
Counterfeit, likeness, picture; III, ii, 115.
County, count; I, ii, 49.
Cousin, any kinsman; III, iv, 50.
Cover, wear hats; II, ix, 44.
Cozen, cheat; II, ix, 38.
Crisped, curled; III, ii, 92.
Cureless, beyond cure; IV, i, 142.

Deface, cancel, destroy; III, ii, 302.
Disabled, crippled; I, i, 123.
Disabling, undervaluing; II, vii, 30.
Discover, reveal; II, vii, 1.
Doit, a small coin; I, iii, 141.
Drive, commute; IV, i, 372.

Eaning, bearing; I, iii, 88.
Eanlings, lambs just born; I, iii, 80.

Election, choice; II, ix, 3.
Enow, enough; III, v, 24.
Envious, malicious; III, ii, 285.
Equal, exact; I, iii, 150.
Ergo, therefore; II, ii, 60.
Estate, state; III, ii, 239; wealth, I, i, 43.
Estimation, value, worth; II, vii, 26.

Fairness, beauty; III, ii, 94.
Fall, let fall; I, iii, 89.
Falls, falls out; III, ii, 204.
Fearful, filling one with fear; I, iii, 176.
Fill-horse, shaft-horse; II, ii, 100.
Find forth, find out, seek; I, i, 143.
Flood, waters, seas; I, i, 10; IV, i, 72.
Fond, foolish; II, ix, 27; III, iii, 9.
Foot, spurn with the foot; I, iii, 119.
Foot, path; II, iv, 36.
Footing, footfall; V, i, 24.
Fore-spurrer, one who spurs or rides in advance; II, ix, 95.
Forfeiture, penalty, due; III, iii, 22; IV, i, 335.
Fraught, freighted; II, viii, 30.
Fretten, fretted; IV, i, 77.

Gaberdine, a loose cloak; I, iii, 113.
Gaged, pledged; I, i, 130.
Garnish, apparel; II, vi, 45.
Glisters, glitters; II, vii, 65.
Gramercy, many thanks; II, ii, 128.
Gross, whole sum; I, iii, 56.
Guard, guardianship; I, iii, 176.
Guiled, full of guile, treacherous; III, ii, 97.

Habit, behavior; II, ii, 199.
Heavens, "for the heavens," for heaven's sake; II, ii, 12.

Imposition, an imposed condition; I, ii, 114; an imposed task; III, iv, 33.
Inexecrable, beyond the power of execration (cursing); IV, i, 128.
Inscrolled, written in a scroll; II, vii, 72.
Insculped, carved in relief; II, vii, 57.

Kept, lived; III, iii, 19.
Knapped, broke into bits; III, i, 10.

Liberal, free, unruly; II, ii, 194.
Likely, promising; II, ix, 92.
Livings, estates; III, ii, 158.
Low, humble; I, iii, 44.

Magnificoes, Venetian nobles; III, ii, 283.
Martlet, a kind of swallow; II, ix, 28.
Mincing, short, dainty; III, iv, 67.
Moe, more; I, i, 108.
Moiety, a part, usually a half; IV, i, 26.

Mutual, common, general; V, i, 77.

Naughty, wicked (a more dignified word than now); III, ii, 18.
Nazarite, Nazarene; I, iii, 35.
Neat, ox; I, i, 112.
Nice, fanciful; II, i, 14.
Nominated, stated; I, iii, 150; IV, i, 259.

Obliged, pledged; II, vi, 7.
Of, on; II, ii, 103; with; II, iv, 24.
Offend'st, vexest; IV, i, 140.
Ostent, demeanor; II, ii, 205; shows; II, viii, 44.
Other, others; I, i, 54.
Out-dwells, out-stays; II, vi, 3.
Out of doubt, without doubt; I, i, 21; I, i, 155.
Over-name, run over their names; I, ii, 39.
Over-weathered, weather-beaten; II, vi, 18.

Pain, pains; II, ii, 194.
Parts, duties, functions; IV, i, 92.
Passion, outcry; II, viii, 12.
Patch, fool, simpleton; II, v, 46.
Peize, weigh, keep in suspense, delay; III, ii, 22.
Pent-house, a porch with a sloping roof; II, vi, I.
Persuaded, argued; III, ii, 284.
Port, importance; III, ii, 284; appearance; I, i, 124.
Possessed, informed; I, iii, 65; IV, i, 35.
Post, courier, postman; II, ix, 100; V, i, 46.
Preferred, recommended; II, ii, 154.
Presence, dignity of bearing; III, ii, 54.
Presently, immediately; I, i, 183; II, ix, 3.
Prevented, anticipated; I, i, 61.
Prize, contest for a prize; III, ii, 142.
Process, manner; IV, i, 274.
Proper, handsome; I, ii, 77.

Qualify, modify; IV, i, 7.
Quaintly, gracefully; II, iv, 6.
Quiring, singing in concert; V, i, 62.
Quit, remit; IV, i, 381.

Raised, roused; II, viii, 4.
Redoubted, redoubtable, terrible; III, ii, 88.
Regreets, greetings; II, ix, 89.
Remorse, compassion; IV, i, 20.
Repent, regret; IV, i, 278, 279.
Rhenish, a kind of wine; III, i, 44.
Rheum, spittle; I, iii, 118.
Rib, enclose; II, vii, 51.
Ripe, urgent; I, iii, 64.
Riping, ripening; II, viii, 40.
Road, harbor; V, i, 288; I, i, 19.
Sad, grave; II, ii, 205.
Scanted, restrained, limited; II, i, 17.

Scarfed, decorated with flags; II, vi, 15.
'Scuse, excuse; IV, i, 444.
Seasons, tempers, softens; IV, i, 197.
Self, self-same; I, i, 148.
Should, would; I, ii, 100.
Shows, outward appearance; II, vii, 20.
Signior (pronounced seen-yur), an Italian gentleman; I, i, 10.
Simple, absolute; III, ii, 81.
Sirrah, sir, (used only to inferiors); I, ii, 146.
Slubber, slur over; II, viii, 39.
Smug, neat; III, i, 48.
So, provided that; III, ii, 197.
Something, somewhat; I, i, 124.
Sooth, truth; I, i, 1.
Sore, sorely; V, i, 307.
Spend, waste; I, i, 153.
Spoils, acts of plundering; V, i, 85.
Still, continually; I, i, 17; I, i, 136.
Stockish, lacking sensibility; V, i, 81.
Straight, straightway; I, iii, 175; II, ix, 1.

Tell, count; II, ii, 114.
Thrift, success; I, i, 175; profits; I, iii, 51.
Throughfares, thoroughfares; II, vii, 42.
Traject, ferry; III, iv, 53.

Undervalued, inferior; I, i, 165.

Vailing, bending; I, i, 28.
Vantage, opportunity; III, ii, 176.
Vasty, vast; II, vii, 41.
Very, true, real; III, ii, 226.
Vile, worthless; II, iv, 6.
Void, spit out; I, iii, 118.

Waft, wafted; V, i, 11.
Weather, storms; II, ix, 29.
Where, whereas; IV, i, 22.
While, time; II, i, 31.
Wis, know; II, ix, 68.
Wroth, sorrow, misfortune; II, ix, 78.

Younker, young man; II, vi, 14.

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